THE *Excellency* AND *Equitableneſs* OF Gods Law, AND THE *Unreaſonableneſs of Sin.*

G.15.65

Wherein you have a

DISCOVERY

I. *What theſe Laws are the tranſgreſſion of which is ſin?*
II. *Why God hath impoſed Laws upon the ſons of men?*
III. *Why the tranſgreſſing of theſe Laws is ſin?*
IV. *Whether the tranſgreſſing of mans Law be a ſin?*
V *Whether ignorance of the Law be ſufficient to exempt from guilt in the violation of the Law?*
VI *What diſhonour is done to God, what evils and inconveniences we bring upon our ſelves by ſin, &c.*

By *G. H. C.* to *D. M.* in *T. G.*

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TO THE Reader.

Courteous Reader,

IT is not importunitie of Friends, falſe Copies, and ſuch like Pleas (which have often more of pretence then truth) that gave being and birth to theſe Papers. It is not becauſe the Author hath no obligations to anſwer, that makes this appear in a turbulent world without a Paſs: Its the ordinary way to gain credit and ſafe conduct to dedicate Books to ſome great Name to be a fence againſt detraction: what is ſaid in Dedications is ordinarily interpreted, as what of courſe is ſaid on ſuch occaſions, rather becauſe its uſual then becauſe its Juſt. Should I have preſented theſe immaturities of Age and Judgment, to the diſcerning Preſence of that honourable Perſon before whom they were preacht, and given the World an Account of her eminent Vertues, I ſhould have made her Modeſtie do Penance; could not add any thing to her merits, her Piety being above my praiſe, and might have gain'd among ſome the imputation of flatterie, which I al-

ways abhor'd. It will perhaps be reckoned a piece of ill Nature, to add to the presses, groans & great indiscretion to expose such imperfections and deformities to the clearest Sunshine that some others prudence would have directed into the Shades and more private recesses. But why may not the lesser size of mortals, and those who possibly know little, but what they have glean'd from others labors, serv God and their generation in a lower sphere; Must the lesser Stars withhold their light, because God hath plac'd the Sun, and other Stars of greater Magnitude and Lustre in the Firmament. My bringing a Cockle-shell of water from the Ocean, may perhaps have this good effect of stirring up others to bring their larger vessels. I own it a piece of Confidence, which I wonder at in my self, to offer things to the view of so many Criticks and censorious Scepticks, which abound in this Age, every man almost differing from another, the most from themselves. Its hard to escape the tongue-Strapado in this Iron Age. But theres no reproach in the scoffs of Ignorance, or drollings of Phantasticks, who have only wit enough to make others and themselves ridiculous, that play tricks with words, and frolick with frothy imaginations. If I stand fair in the opinion of valuable discerners, I shall easily scorn contemptible popularity. If you meet with some things which cross your private apprehensions; let not a fond dotage on the brats of your own brain overmaster

you,

you, and produce heat and haſte, unmanly bitterneſs and effeminate babble. As long as there are different faces, there will be different conceptions in this lapſed condition. I deſire others may be as cold and indifferent in matters of circumſtantial belief, as I my ſelf am in matters diſputable; I am more inclineable to diſtruſt then to confide in my own conceptions, for confidence in uncertainties is the greateſt enemie to what is certain. But in matters truly fundamental and unqueſtionable, there be fixt and firmly rooted where things occur, wherein your ſouls ſalvation is concerned, there let faith and obedience have their perfect work. Do not deſpiſe the matter becauſe it appears in an ordinary dreſs, a natural and unaffected way, though leſſe eloquent, is better then the muſick and curioſity of fine Metaphors, and dancing Periods; A manly ſenſe far exceeding an effeminate gaudery. Some count it a great attainment to ſpeak and write great ſwelling words of vanity, and make up the defects of reaſon with higher degrees of impudence, dreſſing up ignorance in words of bulk and ſound, hereby learned fools ſeem Oracles among the Populacy, but words and ſtiles cannot give acceptation and efficacy to guilded nothings. There are ſome of weak heads, and others of vile affections, who have made an unnatural divorce between being wiſe and good. Some counting it an inſtance of devout zeal to declaim againſt reaſon, others a piece of Wit and

Gallantry, to ſcorn Piety, and make a mock of ſin. The impiety of mens lives makes them regret a Deity, and ſecretly wiſh there were none. Their unbounded propenſions makes them inclineable to believe Gods Laws are rigorous and unreaſonable, the ſenſe of God and his Laws being a reſtraint and check upon the Licence of their actions; thus all wickedneſs and debauchés will flow in upon the world like a mighty deluge, and beat down all the banks of Laws, Vertue and Sobriety. But ſurely men of birth and fortune cannot better concern their treble intereſt of pleaſure, eſtate and honour, then by a hearty, uniform deſire and endeavour to conform to the Laws of God, and of lawful humane Authority, which are ſo far from thwarting, that they ſupport each other. It is a dangerous ſceptical conceit, that Piety *and* Loyaltie *are incompatible; as if he that commanded us to Fear God, had not ſuperadded Honour your King; and he that bids us Give to Cæſar the things which are Cæſars, had not alſo enjoyn'd us to give God alſo his due. The deſign of this Treatiſe is to promote both* Piety to God, Loyalty to their King; *therefore the Excellency and Equitableneſs of Gods Laws are diſcovered, and our obligation to obedience. And the Unreaſonableneſs of ſin being highly diſhonourable to God Almighty, defiling and deſtructive to the ſoul; And alſo the Obligation of Mans*

Law

Law upon the Conſcience, by vertue of, and in ſubordination to the divine Law, God having made it our duty to pray for and obey our Superiors. Therefore we muſt needs be ſubject, not only for wrath, but for Conſcience ſake. Thoſe are the beſt taſted pleaſures, and moſt ſweetly reliſhing and cleanly Joys, that flow from a Conſcience void of offence towards God and men. Their Conſciences cannot be right towards God, who are knowingly and wilfully neglective of their duties to men, diſloyalty being a high piece of Impiety. Though ſome ſuch groundleſly reckon reckon themſelves amongſt the higheſt ſort of Saints, yet Gods Word reckons them amongſt the higheſt ſort of Sinners To be reckoned among traitors, heady, high-minded, proud, boaſters, diſobedient to Parents, without natural affections, truce-breakers, and be ſentenced to Corah's doom is enough to make ſuch as have truly tender Conſcienees to tremble. That God may be glorified, his Commandments obeyed; that ſin may appear as it is, exceeding ſinful, and people may hate and forſake it. That the lawful Commands of our Superiors for Gods ſake may be obſerved, that Peace in Church and Kingdome may be kept, love and unity maintained, and ſouls ſaved, is the prayer of him who acknowledgeth himſelf to be

Minor, Minimo, and unworthy to be called a Miniſter of Jeſus

G. H.

1 JOHN 3.4.

Whoſoever committeth Sin, tranſgreſſeth alſo the Law: for Sin is the tranſgreſſion of the Law.

GOD Almighty who is the ſole Creator and Governor of the World, hath alone an abſolute and independent dominion over the ſouls of men, he hath the *Legiſlative* power in his hand, to bind to the performance of what duties he pleaſeth, which carry no repugnancy in them to the divine nature and goodneſs.

Hence ariſe all thoſe poſitive *Laws* of God which we have in *Scripture*; for Gods end in his written Law was, that Man ſhould have a Copy of divine *Canons* and *Conſtitutions* by him, that he might therein read what his duty was to his Maker.

For God intending to bring ſome of mankind to happineſs, by conditions

of his own appointing, hath laid down many poſitive Precepts, binding men to the performance of thoſe things as duties, which are commanded by him.

But where we find no command for performance, there the omiſſion is no ſin; and where we find no prohibition for forbearance, there the performance can be no tranſgreſſion, becauſe of the neceſſary relation between Duty and Law, for where there is no Law there is no tranſgreſſion.

Mans obligation to any thing as Duty, preſuppoſeth theſe two things on his part, from whoſe authority he derives his obligation.

1. *Legiſlation.*
2. *Promulgation.*

1. There muſt be a Legiſlative power commanding it, which if it reſpect only the outward action of a man in a Nation imbodied by Laws is the ſupreme Magiſtrate; But if the obligation reſpect the conſciences of all men directly and immediately, then none have the power to ſettle any thing is an univerſal ſtanding Law to all Nations but God himſelf, who as Father of

of Spirits, hath dominion over the spirits and souls of men; but where this Legislator hath not thought fit to limit us by Law, there is no transgression for sin, &c.

2. Besides Legislation another thing necessary to mans obligation to duty, is a sufficient promulgation of the Law made, though before promulgation there be the ground of obedience on mans part, yet there must be a particular declaration of the Laws, whereby man is bound in order to the determination of his duty; Therefore the Apostle saith, they that have not the Law, that is, the promulgation of the positive Law of God, shall be judged without the Law.

This promulgation is absolutely necessary in positives, so that unless there be a sufficient promulgation and declaration of the will of the Lawgiver, mans ignorance is excusable with reference to them, and so free from guilt, and obligation to punishment; for where there is no manifestation of a Law, its all one as if there were no Law at all; and where no Law is either in being, or manifestation, there is no

tranſgreſſion. But its otherwiſe with reference to the dictates of the natural Law, wherein though man may ſometimes be at a loſs for them, yet his own contracted pravity being the cauſe of his blindneſs, leaves him without excuſe.

Now God Almighty hath been pleaſed to give Laws to the ſons of men, and to ſuperadde divine ſanctions, enforcing precepts with promiſes, prohibitions with threats.

Thoſe Laws of his which are perpetually obligatory, are laid down ſo plainly, that they that have their ſenſes exerciſed, may eaſily diſcern the mind of God. Gods deſire in the promulgation of his will, is that we may know and obey. Gods making Laws were in vain, if he did not declare them; if this declaration were obſcure and ambiguous, it were no declaring and revealing, but concealing. Now when it hath pleaſed God to make a Law, and hath proclaim'd, and plainly reveal'd it. If we tranſgreſs this Law we ſin, for ſin is the tranſgreſſion of a Law.

There are two things which ſhould pre-

vail with us not to commit sin.

1. Our love of and relation to God; *If we love God we should keep his Commandments, for this is the love of God that we keep his Commandments*; and our relation to God, as sons, layeth a further obligation, *we are children of God*, and should not violate the Laws of our heavenly Father, *for he that committeth sin is of the Devil, for the Devil sinneth from the beginning.*

2. Our awe and reverence of the Law of God, and those threats that are superadded and threatned to be inflicted on the Violaters of it, for whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the Law.

This word also discovers, that this is an argument superadded to those before mentioned, he that sinneth doth not onely discover want of love to God, and doth that which is unbecoming a son of God, but he transgresseth also the Law of God.

In which words you have

1. A Proposition which is this, *Whosoever committeth sin, &c.*
2. The Reason or Confirmation of this Proposition, *for sin, &c.*

That I may take in both theſe, and give you a clear and full account of this Scripture, I ſhall obſerve this method.

1. *Lay down ſeveral Propoſitions for Explication.*
2. *What thoſe Laws are, the tranſgreſſion of which is ſin?*
3. *Why God hath impoſed Laws upon the ſons of men?*
4. *Why the tranſgreſſing of theſe* Laws *is ſin?*
5. *Whether the tranſgreſſing of Mans* Law *be a ſin?*
6. *Whether ignorance of the* Law *be ſufficient to exempt from guilt in the violation of the* Law?
7. *Whether in thoſe Matters, where we have no* Law, *no* Precept *or* Prohibition *divine, there we are at our own liberty.*
8. *Whether Scripture-practice, divine acts, and divine approbation, abſtracted from divine* Precepts, *have the force of a* Law.
9. *What diſhonour is done to God, what evils and inconveniences we bring upon our ſelves by ſin, which is tranſgreſſing the* Law.
10. *Make Application.*

I

1. I begin with those Propositions which must be laid down in order to the Explication of the words, and to clear my passage in unfolding those Cases I have propounded.

I. The first concerns the extent and latitude of the Text in that extensive word, *Whosoever*. And its this,

That every man, of what state and condition soever, high or low, bond or free, converted or unconverted, *If he transgress Gods Law, he sinneth*, neither God nor his Law hath respect of persons. Some there are that say, the Converted sin not. Indeed they do not ποιεῖν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν, they do not make that their work and trade. Its excentrick to their new life and motion; and *quatenus* θεογενὲς, as they are born of God, so they sin not, for sin is ἐκ τῆ πονηρῆ ἢ σαρκὸς, from the flesh and the devil, and they cannot sin that sin which is πρὸς θάνατον, unto death, because that φῶς πνευματικὸν καὶ σπέρμα θεοῦ, spiritual light, divine spark, and seed of God, cannot be destroyed in them, and is a preservation from the great transgression. But though in these and some other respects they sin not, yet they are

not in this world ſo privileg'd, as not to ſin at all. St. *John* who was no whit inferiour to any of the Apoſtles, but had a larger ſhare then the reſt in his Maſters affections, puts himſelf into the liſt. *If we ſay that we have no ſin, we deceive our ſelves, and the truth is not in us*; that light and ſpirit that tells people that they are perfect, and ſin not, is dark and diabolical, and what need Confeſſion, if no Commiſſion of ſin; what need is there of παράκλητος πρὸς τὸν πατέρα καὶ ἱλασμὸς, an Advocate to the father, and propitiation for our ſins, if there be no ſinning. So that converted ones ſin, but though they ſin God ſees not ſin in them, ſay others; he doth not approve of it, nay, diſlikes it more in them then others, yet if they ſin he muſt needs ſee it, ſeeing he puniſheth them for it. *Therefore whoever ſinneth tranſgreſſeth Gods Law*. The Law indeed was not made for a righteous perſon, nay, nor yet for ſinners in its primary intention, as to its condemnation and puniſhment, but in its primary intention for their coertion and reſtraint, to keep them from ſin and from puniſhment. To ſay

1 John 1.1, 8,9.

1 Tim. 1 9.

that

that God made Laws to entrap poor mortals, that they might tranſgreſs them and ſo be brought to eternal puniſhment, is to ſay that God deſigns, if not deſires the death of ſinners. It is true indeed, the *Law* ſhall prove a judging and condemning Law to impenitent and unbelieving ſinners, but it was no more Gods intention to condemn men in the publiſhing of the Law by *Moſes*, then it was his purpoſe to condemn men by the Goſpel, which yet *de facto* will be a ſavour of death to all that deſpiſe it, the *Law* by accident doth puniſh and curſe. I ſay by accident becauſe puniſhment is in no Law the main intention of the lawgiver, but ſomething added thereto to enforce obedience. The Law would curſe none if it were not for ſin, whoſoever they be that ſin doe tranſgreſs Gods Law, and bring themſelves under the curſe and puniſhment of the Law.

See Mr. Reynolds uſe of the Law p. 384.

2. The next concerns the nature of ſin.

Not only to doe that evil which the *Law* prohibits, but to omit the doing of that good which the Law commands is a tranſgreſſion. *Sin* conſiſts

sists in want of conformity, as well as contrariety to Gods *Law*. Some people conceit they are good enough if they doe no harm, be not injurious to their neighbour, escape the common pollutions of the world; but this negative goodness will not serve turn, the barren figtree was cursed, not for its fruitfulness in bad, but barrenness of good fruit; the unprofitable servant was cast into outmost darkness, not for abusing but not using and improving his talent. It is not enough to refrain from sin on the Lords day, which is not to be done on any day, or from worldly imployments and recreations which are lawful on other days, but you must also be employed in publick and private exercises of Gods worship. We must not only forbear the evil that the Law prohibits, but perform that good which the Law requires: Therefore we have a general distribution of the commands into duties to be done, and sins to be avoided.

To know the nature and difference between affirmative and negative precepts,

cepts you have two Rules.

1. Affirmative precepts bind *semper* but not *ad semper*, always, but not at all times, though we are obliged to the thing, yet the thing being capable of different circumstances of time, and place, and interserving of other duties, we are not at all times obliged. I am obliged to the duties of prayer and praise, hearing and giving alms, but not at all times, for if at all times I am obliged to any one duty, all the other must be totally omitted.

2. Negative precepts bind *semper*, and *ad semper*, always and at all times, for we are at all times obliged to abstain from *Idolatry*, *murder*, *theft*, *whoredom*, and the like.

3. The next proposition concerns the nature of a Divine Law.

A Divine Law is that which layeth an obligation upon conscience, to doe or not to doe, grounded upon that absolute power God hath to command or prohibit. In general a law is that whereby any person lies under a necessity of doing, omitting, or suffering a thing to be, or else hath a lawful

ſul authority of doing, *Jus* is that which is *Juſtum*, juſt and righteous, *Jus dictum quia juſtum eſt*, ſo *Iſidore*. *Whatever is juſt men have right to do it*, a thing may be ſaid to be juſt more generally as it ſignifyeth any thing that is lawfull, or in a more reſtrained ſenſe when it ſignifieth ſomething that is equal and due to another. Thus *Ariſtotle* divides τὸ δίκαιον into τὸ νόμιμον καὶ τὸ ἴσον. In this latter ſenſe are the Laws of God chiefly to be taken, as that which is lawful, and equal, either having an innate goodneſs, as the law of nature, or as being good and Juſt, becauſe commanded by him who is holy, Juſt, and good, as the poſitive Laws of God.

4. It is not the tranſgreſſion of any Law that is a Sin, but the tranſgreſſion of Gods Law, mans Law may ſometimes be tranſgreſt without ſin, yea it is a ſin not to tranſgreſs it, but this is onely when it contradicts Gods Law, yet in other caſes it is not as mans Law that it become ſin, but as the tranſgreſſion hath reſpect to Gods Law, God having commanded us to obey our ſuperiours in all things lawful,

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this is it makes it a sin. I shall have occasion to speak of more largely afterwards.

5. It is not the transgression of one only, or more of Gods Laws, that is a sin, but the transgression of any of Gods laws, natural or positive, whether it be good in its own nature or good because commanded, whether it be precept or prohibition, great or little, respecting God or man, first or second Table, we must not be partial in Gods Law, for he that saith *thou shalt not commit Adultery*, saith also *thou shalt not steal*.

6. Its the transgression of a Law by a rational creature. Beasts have no Law, when they doe things good, they are not to be commended, because led by instinct, they are not to be discommended for doing ill, because not committed against a Law. But its man that is only capable of transgressing Gods Law, he being a reasonable creature, able to judge of the goodness or badness of things, capable of being govern'd by Laws.

7. All irregularities in thought, word, and deed, in their habitual and actual

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actual inclinations are ſins, the thought of fooliſhneſs is ſin, yea, ſo much of good, or evil, there is in words, that by our words we ſhall be juſtified, and by our words we ſhall be condemn'd, as inconſiderable as words ſeem to be even among ſome that have a great name for Sanctity, yet they may be damn'd for want of bridling their Tongues. The want of Conformity in our hearts and natures to Gods Law, is ſin as well as actual tranſgreſſions; whatever way the Law is tranſgreſt, in heart, expreſſions or actions, it is ſin, for the Law is ſpiritual and teacheth the heart.

8. Every ſin is formally the tranſgreſſion of ſome particular *Law*, the moral *Law* is as the predicaments in *Logick*, every term may be reduc'd to them. So theſe 10 Commandments are ſo compleat and ſuited to their end that all neceſſary duties may be reduc'd to them, yet one can formally be reduc'd but to one Commandement, but in different reſpects to many, interpretatively the tranſgreſſion of one is the tranſgreſſion of all, ſinning againſt the Authority of God which commands

mands all, breaking that Sacred link that unites all, deſpiſing that equity and goodneſs that runs through all.

9. Where there is no Law there is no tranſgreſſion, it is a Law only can oblige to duty. They are guilty of poſitive Superſtition, who lay a doctrinal neceſſity upon people to do thoſe things which God hath not commanded, thus the *Papiſts* are guilty. They are guilty of negative Superſtition who command people to forbear the doing of ſome things as ſinful, which God hath not forbidden, of this many are guilty among us, who ſay, *touch not, taſt not, kneel not, wear not.* Where there is a Law, and that Law in force and alive, there the ſoul is obliged, but if abrogated, the conſcience doth not bring an accuſation for the breach of it. This is the reaſon of the non obligation of the Ceremonial Law. If you would convince people of ſin, you muſt not onely clearly diſcover them to be guilty of the fact you lay to their charge, but produce ſome law that their fact oppoſeth. I know indifferent things may be made good or bad by circumſtances, but their goodneſs

or

or badneſs flows from their contrariety or conformity to a law according to which they ſhould be ordered. To obſerve things indifferent as indifferent, without any conſcience of the thing it ſelf, only in due ſubmiſſion to the commands of juſt authority, is obedience to obſerve the ſame things without ſuch authority, and that upon ſuperſtitious reaſons directed to bind the conſcience, is in regard of others great ſcandal, and in regard of a mans ſelf-bondage and idolatry. Yea, things commanded may be made evil by the doing of them, when that due reſpect and conformity which the Law wherein it is commanded requireth, is not obſerved.

Eadem opera hominum ſicut cauſas habuerint bonas vel malas nunc ſunt bona nunc mala quæ non ſunt per ſeipſa peccata Aug. Con. *Mendacium. ad Conſent. lib. 2. cap. 7.*

2. What are thoſe laws of God, the tranſgreſsing of which is ſin?

There are two ſorts of Divine laws. 1. The Laws of nature. 2. The poſitive laws of God.

1. For the law of nature, this is founded upon the intrinſecal nature of good and evil in the things themſelves, and the formal reaſon of mans obedience to the precepts of this law, is the conformity the things commanded have to the

the divine nature, and goodneſs, mans reaſon is the chief inſtrument of diſcovering the duties of the law of nature, but divine revelation muſt diſcover the poſitive laws of God. *Ariſtotle* defines a natural law to be that which πανταχοῦ τὴν αὐτὴν ἔχει δύναμιν, hath every where the ſame force and ſtrength, this the Scripture calls the law written in the heart. This law if we reſpect the riſe, extent, and immutability of it is called deſervedly the law of nature, but if we look at the emanation, efflux and original of it, it is a Divine law; the Gentiles which have not the law, that is, the poſitive law of God, are a law to themſelves, for the *Indies* and other barbarous Nations who never had the Scriptures, are not a lawleſs people, without any rule to order their actions, for then how come they to be guilty of tranſgreſſion, for where no law is there is no tranſgreſſion, or how ſhould their conſcience accuſe or excuſe, if they had no guide or rule, but if we grant they have a rule, then there is another rule to humane actions beſides the Word of God written, and this is the law of nature, and righteouſneſs imprinted

in their hearts, which is as truly the law of God (ſaith Dr. *Sanderſon*) as that printed in our Bibles.

2. There is the poſitive law of God, this is founded upon the Will of God, theſe have not any intrinſecal goodneſs in themſelves, but therefore good becauſe commanded; that law to *Adam* prohibiting one ſort of fruit, it was only the prohibition made it evil; Gods law to *Abraham* of offering his Son it was only the command made it Good, without that command it had been altogether Evil; the Laws of Nature are by the Seventy called δικαιώματα, ſoe called by *Joſephus*, *Juſtin Martyr*, τῆς φύσεως δικαιώματα, ſo uſed Rom. 2. 26. But Gods poſitive Laws are called ἐντολαὶ, hence we read of *Zacahry*, and *Eliza.* that they walkt in all the ordinances of God blameleſs, theſe are called νόμος ἐντολῶν, the Law of Commandements. *Cauſabon* out of the *Jewiſh* Rabbins tells us this difference between the Law of nature and poſitive laws of God. The reaſon of the Laws of Nature is evident, to worſhip God, honour our Parents, and thoſe ſeven Precepts of the Sons of

of *Noah* mentioned by Mr. *Weems* in his expoſition of the Commandment, are all founded on the Law of nature, and are evident to reaſon. See Mr. *Medes* Diſ. 3. on *Acts* 17. 4. But of poſitive Laws as Circumciſion, and the Paſcal Lamb, no reaſon can be given but the will of God. The law of nature perpetually obligeth, becauſe the intrinſecal goodneſs or badneſs of things varies not, the poſitive Laws of God are variable, he th t madethem, can repeal them, this is the reaſon of the non-obligation of *Moſes* Law as to the Ceremonial part, but the Judicial Laws which are founded upon common equity do oblige ſtill: this is the reaſon why ſome part of the fourth Commandement is abrogated, and the other continueth ſtill to bind. The School-men ſay right of the Sabbath, *Cultus eſt a natura, modus a Lege, virtus a gratia*, Nature dictates that God ſhould be worſhipped, the law informs what day and time to ſpend in his worſhip, grace muſt enable us to perform that worſhip on that day, in a right manner, that God is to be worſhipped, &

that ſome time is to be ſet apart for his worſhip, nature diſcovers; b t that one part of time of 7, more then one part of 6, or 8, is to be given to God, nature cannot diſcover, yet the general conſent of nations, as to the 7 part, ſpeaks fair to be the voice of nature. Yet granting that the 7. part of time was a poſitive law, yet it binds immutably, becauſe there is as ſtrong, yea, more reaſon for it now, then ever, therefore obliging. Gods reſting on the ſeventh day, and the Jews deliverance out of *Egypt*, being temporary and occaſional, the intervention of a higher matter then theſe are grounds ſufficient for the alteration of the day. Therefore Apoſtolick practiſe which was grounded upon ſo great a work, as the perfecting of our redemption, is a ſufficient ground for the alteration of the day. Whatever ſome are pleaſed to ſay to the contrary, we have further reaſons for the obſervation of the Lords day then other arbitrary Feſtivals of the *Church*.

In both theſe laws there are two things conſiderable, Precepts and Prohibiti-

ons, and these have a double sanction, to enforce precepts there are promises, to enforce prohibitions there are threats; in opposition to which there are sins of a different nature, permissions and ommissions, omissions are the transgressions of those laws which command good, commissions the transgressions of those laws which prohibit evil; the duties required are such as are most becoming God to require, as being suitable and agreeable to the Divine nature, the imitation of which in our actions is the Substance of Religion.

2. They are most reasonable for us to perform, conformity to Gods law is a reasonable service, on a double account,

1. Because its the service of the reasonable faculties, which are most imployed in it. The commands of Scripture, reaching the heart most, as appears plainly by our Saviours exposition of the Commandments, the service required is a spiritual service, not lying in outward observances, but in a sanctified temper of heart and mind.

2. Becauſe the ſervice it ſelf is reaſonable, the commands of the Goſpel are ſuch as no mans reaſon which conſiders them, can doubt of the excellency of them; all natural worſhip is founded in the dictates of nature; all inſtituted worſhip, on Gods revealed Will; and its one of the prime dictates of nature, that God muſt be univerſally obeyed, beſid s God requires nothing but what is apparently our intereſt to doe, tending to the honour and advancement of humane nature. As for prohibitions, God prohibits nothing, but what is diſp'eaſing and diſhonourable to himſelf, and what doth diſhonour defile and deſtroy our ſouls and bodies, its every ones intereſt to take heed of ſin, which is the tranſgreſsing of Gods law.

3. *Why hath God given Laws to the Sons of Men?*

God hath not given laws to be traps and ſnares, not on purpoſe that they may be broke, and poor mortals be brought under the laſh of the law, and be ſentenced to damnation. This is incompetible with his nature, principal attributes, holineſs, mercy, juſtice

stice, sincerity, and with his revealed Will. See Mr. *Hoard* Gods love to mankind.

But he gives laws.

R: 1. To discover that undoubted interest that he hath in, and absolute soveraignty that he hath over the Sons of men.

1. To discover that undoubted interest that *God* hath in us, his we are, him we ought to serve and obey, a father gives laws to his children, and expects obedience, so doth *God* give laws to us, and much more ought we to be in subjection to the Father of Spirits and live. *I am the Lord thy God* is the preface to the ten Commandements, which teacheth us because God is the Lord, and our God and Redeemer, therfore we are bound to keep all his Commandements. *God* hath a right to us by Creation, Redemption, Preservation, The Apostle saith, *ye are bought with a price*, therefore glorifie *God*, in your bodies and in your souls which are his. The truth of this right and Title that *God* hath to us, the fulness of it, and the effect it should have upon us, you may see handled at large in 1 *Cor.* 6. 20.

Mr. *Baxters* Treatiſe of Gods dominion over man, and in his Treatiſe of the divine life.

2. God gives Laws to the ſons of men to discover that abſolute ſovereignty that he hath over the ſons of men, he is our Sovereign King, we ought to be his loving loyal ſubjects, and obey his holy Laws, Gods abſolute dominion over us, implies three things in it. 1. That he may diſpoſe of us as he pleaſeth. 2. That he may rule us and give us what Laws he pleaſeth. 3. That we owe him allegiance and obedience, our yielding obedience to his commands is more then a profeſſional owning him as our Sovereign, the conſideration of Gods Sovereignty over us teacheth us theſe three things.

1. That Gods Authority is the higheſt Authority, and that is not true authority which is againſt him, or not ſubordinate to him. Therefore if man command thoſe things which are directly, or by neceſſary conſequence contrary to the Law of Nature, or the poſitive Laws of God revealed in his Word; Its better in that caſe to obey God then man. 2. Gods

2. Gods *Sovereignty* requires our subjection; subjection is the consent of the will to be subjects, and obey, our understandings must be subject to his doctrine, and resign'd to him as teachable and tractable, when we know what is his *Law* and will, we must rest in it, though we know not the reasons of it. We must submit to the wisdom of the infallible Lawgiver, that cannot deceive or be deceived. This is essential to our holy *Covenant* and *Christianity*, when God is taken to be our God, we give up our selves to be his people; when we take him to be our King, we give up our selves to be his subjects.

3. *Subjection* must produce obedience, subjection is the root of obedience, and virtually contains it; obedience is the fruit of subjection, and supposeth it. Its not calling God your King and *Lawgiver*, but obeying him that will prove you his subjects; *Not every one that saith, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the Will of my Father which is in Heaven*, saith our Saviour, *Mat.*7.21 *Mat.* 7. 21.

This

This is one reaſon of Gods giving us Laws, to diſcover his undoubted intereſt in us, and abſolute dominion over us.

R. 2. God hath given Laws to the ſons of men to keep the world in awe and order, the world cannot ſubſiſt without government, and no government without Laws; hence it is that God hath ordained powers, and ſubſtituted Kings and Emperours, as his vicegerents on earth, and made it an indiſpenſible duty to be ſubject to them. The reaſon that moved God Almighty hereto, was partly his Soveraign Lordſhip over man by right of creation, by which he may order and diſpoſe of him at pleaſure; partly the great love he bears to humane Society, which his infinite Wiſdom ſaw could not be well maintained, if every man ſhould be left to himſelf; hereupon God hath ordained it, and made it a part of his Sacred Canons and Conſtitutions, that ſome ſhould be in authority, ſome live in ſubjection, commanding the one to rule, according to Juſtice and equity, the other to ſubmit themſelves with all lowli-

lowliness and humility. That ἀντιλογία καὶ δόξης βλασφημία, speaking contemptibly of government, must needs proceed from that enemy of mankind, whose design is by destroying order and government, to overturn the world, and those who believe it to be a part of their Saintship, to despise Dominions, are probably the followers of *Simon Magus* the *Leviathan* of the Primitive Church, who destroyed all the natural differences of good and evil.

Dr. Stilling. serm. on Jude 11.

R: 3. God hath given laws to the Sons of men, that by obedience to them they may attain to happiness; the light of nature was so dim, that it was not sufficient to guide us to Heaven, God hath therefore of his goodness superadded positive laws for our further direction; God is pleased to conduct man to his end and happiness; by means suitable to his nature, that is, by the Revelation of the reward before he enjoys it, that he may seek it and be fitted for it, and by threatned penalties be quickned to his duty, everlasting glory is promised, to engage us to do what is commanded; eternal misery

is

is threatned to ingage us to avoid what is forbidden.

4. Why is it ſuch a hainous thing to tranſgreſs the Laws of God?

1. Becauſe the things commanded for the greateſt part of them are not only good becauſe command d, but good in their own nature, and that upon a double account.

1. Becauſe the greateſt part of them are things that are commanded by the Law of nature. To fear God, obey our ſuperiors, do no wrong, do as we would be done by; Theſe the Law of Nature commands; now the Law of Nature is that which is founded upon the intrinſecal nature, of good and evil in the things themſelves.

2. Becauſe obedience to Gods Commands, is an imitation of him, who is altogether good, the ſubſtance of godlineſs is the imitation of God. Mortifying ſin, growing in grace, is an imitation of God in his goodneſs, and holineſs. Our kindneſs to all men, forgiving

giving injuries, doing good to our enemies; this is imitating God in grace and mercy, to do as we would be done by, and keep conſciences void of offence, is imitating God in his Juſtice, and Equity. All acts of Piety towards God, are a part of Juſtice. *Quid aliud eſt pietas, niſi Juſtitia adverſus deos*, ſaith *Tully*; and ſo our loving God with our whole heart. Sincere obedience to his will, is a part of natural Juſtice, for thereby we render to God that which is due from us, as we are his creatures. Its a hainous thing to tranſgreſs Gods Law, it being a refuſing to do that which is good in its own nature, being agreeable in the greateſt part to the Law of Nature, which commands things intrinſecally good, and prohibits things intrinſecally evil, and is an imitation of him who is goodneſs it ſelf.

2. Its a hainous offence to tranſgreſs Gods Law, becauſe it is folly and unreaſonableneſs. Wiſdom is but another name for goodneſs, and folly for ſin; it is a high piece of folly to tranſgreſs Gods Law, no good reaſon in the world

Dr. Stilling. ſerm. fools make a.

world can be produc'd for your breaking Gods Commands, have you any reaſon to diſown Gods authority, and queſtion the equity of his Laws. No reaſon can be produc'd againſt truth and reaſon it ſelf, have you any reaſon to break your Makers Laws, diſhonour the Lord of glory, croſs your ultimate end, throw away a Crown of glory, damn your own ſouls. Dare any of you ſay in cool blood, what *Jonas* did in a phrenſie of paſſion, *I do well to be angry*; dare any one that is well in his wits ſay, I do well to lie, ſwear, curſe, be drunk, commit whoredom, prophane the Sabbath, I do well to be proud, preſumptuous, atheiſtical, covetous, hypocritical; durſt thou venture on a diſpute with God, art thou able to confute him; wilt thou accuſe God, and his Laws, of injuſtice, and too much rigour. Damned ſouls in Hell know the unreaſonableneſs of the choiſe, in chuſing ſin before ſanctity, and would give ten thouſand worlds they had made a better choiſe. Glorified Saints in Heaven,

ven, ſee the reaſonableneſs of their choiſe, and would not for all the world have choſen other Saints on earth, who have their ſenſes exerciſ'd, ſee the excellency and equity of Gods *Laws*, and have choſen the cruelleſt death, rather then they would violate the Laws of their Maker; wicked men themſelves, when their eyes are opened, and their Conſcience awakened, when they ſee the Judge ſtanding at the door, and Judgment approaching, are convinc'd of the righteouſneſs and reaſonableneſs of Gods Laws, and reflect upon it with ſhame and ſorrow that they ſhould act like fools, and mad men, in tranſgreſſing Gods Laws.

3. It is a hainous offence to tranſgreſs Gods Law, becauſe it is an oppoſing and contradicting the Word and Will of him, who is our Maker, and Maſter, and hath an undoubted authority to command us. Sin is a contrariety to God the chiefeſt good. Its contrary to his nature, his holineſs and purity, ſin in all

world can be produc'd for your breaking Gods Commands, have you any reaſon to diſown Gods authority, and queſtion the equity of his Laws. No reaſon can be produc'd againſt truth and reaſon it ſelf, have you any reaſon to break your Makers Laws, diſhonour the Lord of glory, croſs your ultimate end, throw away a Crown of glory, damn your own ſouls. Dare any of you ſay in cool blood, what *Jonas* did in a phrenſie of paſſion, *I do well to be angry*; dare any one that is well in his wits ſay, I do well to lie, ſwear, curſe, be drunk, commit whoredom, prophane the Sabbath, I do well to be proud, preſumptuous, atheiſtical, covetous, hypocritical; durſt thou venture on a diſpute with God, art thou able to confute him; wilt thou accuſe God, and his Laws, of injuſtice, and too much rigour. Damned ſouls in Hell know the unreaſonableneſs of the choiſe, in chuſing ſin before ſanctity, and would give ten thouſand worlds they had made a better choiſe. Glorified Saints in Heaven,

ven, see the reasonableness of their choise, and would not for all the world have chosen other Saints on earth, who have their senses exercis'd, see the excellency and equity of Gods *Laws*, and have chosen the cruellest death, rather then they would violate the Laws of their Maker; wicked men themselves, when their eyes are opened, and their Conscience awakened, when they see the Judge standing at the door, and Judgment approaching, are convinc'd of the righteousness and reasonableness of Gods Laws, and reflect upon it with shame and sorrow that they should act like fools, and mad men, in transgressing Gods Laws.

3. It is a hainous offence to transgress Gods Law, because it is an opposing and contradicting the Word and Will of him, who is our Maker, and Master, and hath an undoubted authority to command us. Sin is a contrariety to God the chiefest good. Its contrary to his nature, his holiness and purity, sin in all

all its workings, contradicts God;
Rom. 8. 5. hence its called enmity to God, walk-
Lev. 26. 21. ing contrary to God, resisting God,
Acts 7. 51 fighting against God, striving against
Acts 5. 9. God; rising up against God, all the
Isa 45. workings of sin are against God. Sin
Mic. 2. 8. resists God in his authority, sovereignty, dominion, and laith, God shall not reign, his will and laws shall not be my rule, *Who is the Lord that I should obey him*? every transgressing of Gods Law is a rebelling against God. He that wilfully violates the Kings Laws, is a Rebel, in those sins wherein men pretend Gods honour, there is rebellion, as you may see in that example of *Saul*;
1 *Sa.* 15 *Saul* in reserving the fattest of the Cattel, pretends height of affection to God, and his worship, and high devotion: But it was Rebellion. Every transgression of the Law of God is a despising God, by transgressing Gods Law thou despisest the Commandment
2 *Sa.* 12. 9. of the Lord. Thus it was said of *Da-*
Psal. 50. *vid*, it is a reproaching the Lord, a casting his Law behind our back, its a hainous thing to transgress Gods law, because thereby you lift up your hand against God, blaspheming the Name of God.

God, is by some translations rendred, striking through the Name of God indeed Gods Name is in his law, his truth and wisdom, righteousness, and goodness, is his Name, and these are in his law, every transgression of Gods law strikes at Gods Name and being.

1. In that sinners wish Gods laws were not so just and strict, now this is to wish he were not God, if he were not perfectly Holy and Just, and did not hate sin as much as he doth, he were not God.

2. In that it is the nature of contraries to seek the destruction of each other, as fire seeks the destruction of water, now sin is directly contrary to God. Though a sinner cannot by sin hurt God, yet this is the nature of sin, to seek the destruction of the eternal God. I might shew you how much sin wrongs God in his Person, in his Attributes, in his Relations, in his Counsels, in the end for which he made all things. There is an infinite evil in sin, because it strikes at the Soveraignty and Authority of an infinite being, is the transgression of an infinitely Holy, Just and good law, the forfeiture of an in-

finite weight of glory, ſtrikes at the life of the Soul, defaceth the Image of God, things of infinite worth, Nothing but an infinite power can overcome it, an infinite deſert there is in it; loſs of an infinite good, makes an infinite breach, deſerves infinite torments, an infinite price was laid down to expiate its guilt, if it were poſsible we muſt hate it with an infinite hatred. God is an infini e good; becauſe the univer al cauſe of all good, ſin is an infinite evil, becauſe the univerſal cauſe of all evil. The infiniteneſs of God is ſhadowed out by all good things, the infiniteneſs of ſin is ſhadowed out by all evil things; Gods infinite goodneſs is ſet out by himſelf, becauſe there is no higher good than himſelf; the evil of ſin is ſet forth by it ſelf, becauſe no greater evil than ſin: put all theſe things together and they will amount to an undeniable demonſtration that it is a hainous thing to tranſgreſs the law.

4. It is a hainous thing to tranſgreſs Gods Law. Becauſe it is a contradicting of that profeſſion that you make of obedience to Gods Law, and a breaking of thoſe ſacred Vows and Covenants,

venants, whereby you have obliged your selves to keep Gods Law.

1. Its a contradicting of that profession you make of obedience to Gods Law, saith the Apostle, *Rom.* 2. 23. *Thou that makest thy boast of the Law, through breaking the Law, dishonourest thou God.* The Name of God is blasphemed through you, we all of us make profession of keeping Gods Law, else why do you pray to God, to incline your hearts to keep Gods Law. Thou that professest to keep Gods Law, through transgressing the Law, dishonourest thou God? When I compare peoples carriage with their Creed, their practice with their profession, I think they are mad-men or fools, for why do you profess that which you never intend to practise, or else why do you not practise what you profess. If your profession of Religion be bad, why do you profess it; If it be good, why do you not practise it. Your transgressing Gods Law is a contradicting your profession; your profession doth not teach you to ly, swear, cheat, cozen, curse, blaspheme Gods Name, be drunk, commit whoredom, profane Sabbaths, either Rom. 2. 23.

throw away your bibles, or your ſins, out of your houſes, for your practiſing iniquity and profeſſing the holy Scriptures, cannot ſtand together, your tranſgreſſing Gods law, is not only contrary to your owning the 10 Commandements, but contrary to every petition in the Lords Prayer, and every Article of your Creed, I will only give you little hints of it with reference to the Lords Prayer. You call God Father and where's your Honour and Obedience; Children owe Duty and Obedience to their heavenly Father, and will you tranſgreſs his laws, and manifeſt your ſelves to be of your father the Devil, who was a tranſgreſſor from the beginning: you ſay, Hallowed be thy Name, and will you by tranſgreſſing Gods law, diſhonour and profane his Name; you pray for the comming of his Kingdom, and doing his Will; by tranſgreſſing Gods law, you contradict his Will, and are hinderers of his Kingdom; how can you expect food and raiment, when you abuſe the one to gluttony, and drunkenneſs, the other to pride and wantonneſs; how can you beg forgiveneſs, when you doe

not

not confess and forsake, but desire to have the old score wip't off, that you may begin a new one; when you will not forgive others their trespasses, how can you desire not to be led into temptation, and be delivered from evil, when you run wilfully into temptation, tempt the tempter, and are resolved to persist in evil: by transgressing *Gods* law you contradict your Prayers, you also want every Article in your *Creed*, and you breake those *Sacred* Vows, whereby you have engaged your selves to keep *Gods Law*, your Sacrament, and sick-bed Vows; This is sufficient to discover what a hainous sin it is to transgress *Gods Law*; though it be a sin to transgress *Gods* Law, yet is there any evil in transgressing mans *Law*?

5. *Whether transgressing Mans Law be a sin?*

In answer to this, I shall assert these four things.

1. That the Magistrate hath power to impose laws, and that both in sacred and civil matters, this appears by that power that *David, Solomon, Asa, Jehosaphat, Hezekiah*, had, who maintained, and defended that which was the true Religion, and extirpated what opposed it, its promised that Kings should be nursing fathers to the Church. This power is not *potestas Ecclesiastica, Imperata facienda*, to doe the things commanded, this belongs to the Ministerial Function; but his power is *circa Ecclesiastica, imperare facienda*, to command the things to be done. The Magistrate must not preach the Gospel, nor administer Sacraments, but he must take care that these be duly done, by those to whose function it belongs. The Magistrate hath not a power to revoke, repeal, or alter, any Divine positive law, nor by his own will constitute what new laws he pleaseth, for the worship of God; this was *Jeroboams* fault, *who made Israel to sin*. But the Magistrate may make that which is a Divine law already, become the law of the Land; Religion may be incorporated among our Laws, and the Bible

Grot. de Imp sum. c. 2. l. 1.

Bible become our *Magna Charta.*

2. Those laws imposed upon us by the Magistrate bind the Conscience, not immediately, but mediately; not primarily, but secondarily; not in themselves and their own power, but in force and vertue of a Divine law: Divine law I say whether that which is imprinted in the heart by nature, or that which is reveal'd to us by Scripture, both which command Subjection; I mention this in opposition to the *Papists*, who say mens laws bind, *non minus quam lex Divina*, equally with Gods, and they say we despoil Princes of their Authority, give subjects leave to rebel, bring laws into contempt. But this is onely their say so, for we assert that mans law binds the conscience, but not equally with Gods, nor immediately, but by virtue of Gods commands; we deny not the *rem* that humane laws bind, but onely differ in *modo*, that they bind not immediately; the truth of this appears from these reasons.

1. Because God only is Lord of the Conscience, therefore absolute lawgiver, therefore called *James* 4. 12. *The lawgiver that can save and destroy*, and

as St. *John* ſaith, *is greater then the Conſcience.* If Mans Law bind the Conſcience immediately, and equally with Gods, then is every tranſgreſſion thereof without any further reſpect to Gods Law, a ſin, but the text ſaith, ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐστὶν ἀνομία, ſin is the tranſgreſſion of a law, meaning *Gods* Law; Therefore St. *Auguſtine* ſaith, ſin is *dictum, factum, concupitum*, by ſaying, doing or coveting againſt *Gods* Law, the violation of mans in things lawful is ſin, becauſe *Gods* Law hath made it ſo.

3. If mans Law bind equally with Gods, then when God commands one thing, and mans Law quite contrary, either Gods Law nulls the obligation, or it doth not; if it null the obligation, then *Gods* Law is above mans, and ſo they do not bind equally; if it doth not null it, then theſe abſurdities will follow, 1. That a man may lie under two contrary obligations, as to the ſame thing; he is bound to do it by one Law, and not to do it by the other. 2. That the ſame action may be a duty, and a ſin, a duty in obeying God, a ſin in diſobeying man. 3. That mans power is abſolute and unlimited, and not derived from God and

and limited by his Law. If mans Law bind equally with Gods, then Gods Law cannot take off the obligation; but Gods Law takes off the obligation in every thing, where mans Law contradicts Gods. Therefore God is to be first and chiefly obeyed, and man secondarily, and with reference to God. Therefore mans Law binds not immediately and equally with Gods.

5. If man without respect to Gods Law can bind the Conscience, then he is Lord of the Conscience, and may himself convent, examine it, proceed to sentence either of life or death, both upon body and soul. Mans knowledge and power reacheth no further then the outward man, therefore cannot reach the Conscience.

3. To transgress those Laws of men, which contradict the laws of nature, or positive Laws of God, is no sin, but a duty. *Daniel* transgrest that decree of *Darius* which prohibited prayer to God for 30 days, and sin'd not. St. *Paul* was cal'd and commanded of God, to preach the Name of Jesus, yet he did not forbear, though forbidden by the Magistrate, & for his own defence saith, *whether it be meet to obey God or men, judge ye?* *Dan. 6.*

The

The reaſon of this is evident.

1. Becauſe God hath a greater power and authority over mens conſciences, then any humane authority can have, ſo that if there be any Moral evil in the thing commanded, we are bound to obey God rather then men; in which caſe we doe not formally and directly diſobey the Magiſtrate, but we chuſe to obey God before him.

2. Becauſe it is my duty to obey him firſt, by vertue of whoſe authority I obey another, therefore if the inferior command me any thing contrary to the will and law of the Supream; I am not bound to obey him in it, becauſe both he derives his power ofcommanding, and I my obligation to obedience, from the authority of the *Supream*, which muſt be ſuppoſed to do nothing againſt it ſelf. Thus it is between God, and the Supream Magiſtrate, by him Kings reign, when God gives them a Legiſlative power, he doth it *cumulative*, *non privative*, not ſo as to deprive himſelf or his own laws of their binding force againſt his.

4. To

4. To transgress those commands of lawful Authority which are undetermined by Scripture, and do not contradict the laws of God and nature, this is sinful. In matters undetermined by the Word, concerning the external polity of the Church of God, the Magistrate hath the power of determining things, so they be regulated by the general rules of the Divine law, obedience to authority in all things lawful, is no indifferent thing. We must bring our Conscience to a rule, saith Dr. *Sanderson*, and forbear nothing as against Conscience, which was not against a rule, against Gods Word, against faith or manners, we should comply with publick Authority, to avoid scandal, to testifie our charity, humility and obedience, that laws may be observed, Church composed, Charity revived, Dangers avoided, Kingdom setled, Christians edified, God obeyed, and our Governours for Gods sake. This was *Calvins* counsel to the *English* exiles at *Franckford*, to yield to the Church in things indifferent for peace sake. Obedience to Authority is clearly asserted and commanded in Scripture,

Calv. in ep. fo. 336. Bucer Script Anglii, in Com. p. 456.

ture, 1 Pet. 2. 13. *Submit your selves to every ordinance of man for the Lords sake, whether it be to the King as supream, or unto Governors, as unto them that are sent by him.* Subjection is due both to supream and subordinate, but not alike to both; Sovereign first, because the fulness of humane power originally rests in him, to the subordinate next, because they have it but in part, at the second hand. This obedience to supream and subordinate must not be in some few things, which sute our humor, and may serve some design, but every ordinance which carries no contradiction to, and inconsistency with Gods, *Rom.* 13.1. *Let every soul be subject to the higher powers,* κᾶν ἀπόστολος, ης κᾶν ἐυαγγελίστης, κᾶν προφήτης, *be he an Evangelist, Apostle,* Prophet, Priest, or *be he who he will,* saith Saint *Chrysostome,* Rom.13.5. *Ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience,* ἀνάγκη ὑποτάσσεσθαι, of necessity you must be subject; there is a twofold necessity absolute and simple, when a thing cannot be otherwise; this is not the necessity here meant, for sad experience tells us, that many too often re-

fuse

fuſe to be ſubject. Conditional neceſſity, when ſuch and ſuch things are ſuppoſed, it cannot be otherwiſe; This is the neceſſity here, and there is a double conditional neceſſity ſpecified.

1. If you will avoid wrath you muſt needs be ſubject.

2. If you will keep a good conſcience, you muſt be ſubject; we are bound to ſubjection by a double tie; the one humane, the wrath of the Magiſtrate: he is deſperate that doth περιφρονητὴν, deſpiſe all danger, and is not afraid of wrath. The other is divine, Conſcience towards God; neither of theſe will hold thoſe mentioned, 2 *Tim.* 3, 4. *Traitors, heady, high-minded,* who as bad as they are, have a form of godlineſs, and will plead conſcience for their contempt of authority.

This doctrine of obedience to authority is not left to our liberty, but it is our duty to put you in mind of theſe things. Its the charge S. *Paul* gives to *Titus*, which we muſt diſcharge, *Put them in mind to be ſubject to Principalities and Powers, and to obey Magiſtrates,* Tit. 3. 1.

not

not only ſenſe of duty to God, but love to your ſouls, conſtrains me to it.

Rom. 13. 2. For its ſaid, *Whoſoever reſiſteth the Power, reſiſteth the Ordinance of God, and ſhall receive to themſelves damnation.* Chriſt and his Apoſtles enjoyn obedience to Authority, St. *Paul* in his defence

Acts 25. 8. he makes for himſelf ſaith, *neither againſt the law of the Jews, Neither againſt the Temple, nor yet againſt Cæſar have I offended any thing.* In another place he ſaith, *I have committed nothing*

Act. 28. 17 *againſt the People, nor cuſtom of the Fathers.* It moſt plainly appears from Scripture precepts, and preſidents, that to contradict the laws of our Superiours in things which contradict not the laws of God and nature, is a great ſin, it being a manifeſt contradicting the Word and Will of God, reſiſting Gods ordinance, breaking the bonds of ſociety, opens a wide gap for all impiety; turns the world upſide down; thoſe who are guilty herein I deſire ſeriouſly and impartially to conſider theſe things, leſt they periſh in the gainſaying of *Core*.

Give me leave to ſuperadde theſe three Rules.

1. If

1. If God command any thing, we must submit without any more adoe, and not trouble our selves about the expediency, or lawfulness; *Abraham* disputed neither when it appeared that God would have him sacrifice his Son.

2. If our superiors indued with lawful authority command any thing, we may, yea, ought to enquire into the lawfulness, yet not with an anxious curiosity, as desirous to find out some loophole, to evade it, but modest ingenuity, discovering to God, and the world, and the unfeigned sincerity of our desires, both to fear God, and honour those whom he hath set over us, and having used ordinary Moral diligence, to inform our selves the best we can; if there appear no unlawfulness, we ought to submit, not troubling our selves further to enquire whether it be expedient or no, let them that command it look to that, its they that must answer for it.

3. When Authority hath left us free, no command either of God, or of those that are set over us under God, having prescribed us any thing in that behalf, there it is in our own liberty & choice, to do as we think good, yet not so as to

do

doe what we liſt, but doe that which according to the exigence of preſent circumſtances, (ſo far as the wiſdom and charity we have, will ſerve us to Judg) ſhall ſeem moſt expedient and profitable to mutual edification. There is one caſe which deſerves to be conſidered. Suppoſe I queſtion the lawfulneſs of that which is commanded by Authority, what muſt I doe in that caſe? In anſwer to this, I ſhall give you my thoughts in theſe following Conſiderations. 1. I wiſh heartily that Authority would think fit to lay aſide thoſe things which are doubtful and diſputable, for why ſhould we be ſo ſtrictly tied up to thoſe things which we may doe, or let lone, and be very good Chriſtians: why ſhould the Churches unity and peace be ſuſpended upon ſuch things; the unity of the Church is an unity of love, and affection, and not a bare uniformity of practice or opinion, our controverſies about Religion have brought Religion it ſelf into a controverſie, among weaker Judgements. I wiſh nothing might be impoſed and determined as indifferent, but what is ſufficiently known to be in-

indifferent, in its own nature.

2. The gain-saying Conscience is one thing, the doubting another. If the Conscience hath condemn'd a thing as absolutely unlawful; in that case a man ought by no means to do it, no, not at the Command of the Magistrate, though his Conscience hath pronounc'd a wrong sentence, yet let such a one know, that he sinneth too in disobeying the Magistrate, from which following the dictates of his Conscience cannot acquit him.

3. To do that you doubt of, is not against your Conscience, for doubting is *motus indifferens ad utramque partem contradictionis*, when the scales hang in *Equilibrio*, without any notable propensity or inclination to the one side more then the other; if the doer onely doubt it, its no more against it then with it, and it may be either a sin, or no sin, according to the qualifications it may receive from other circumstances.

4. Where *I* am left to my own liberty, and the authority of the chief Magistrate doth not interpose, there it is safer to forbear then do.

5. Where authority interpoſeth, and I doubt of the lawfulneſs, there it is ſafer to obey then forbear; to doubt is an indifferent motion to either part, now where things hang thus even, if authority will not caſt the ſcales, authority is very light, or elſe there is a great fault in the beam. Again, where there is a certainty and an uncertainty, the ſafeſt way is to let go the uncertainty, and hold faſt that which is certain. The general is certain, that thou art to obey the Magiſtrate in all things, not contrary to Gods Will, but the particular is uncertain, deal ſafely, hold to that which is certain, and obey.

Obj. *But the Apoſtle condemns the doing any thing with a doubting Conſcience, becauſe doubting is contrary to faith, and he that doubteth is damned if he eat.*

Rom. 14. 23.

Anſw.

Answ. We must not take texts fitted for particular occasions, and the condition of the times wherein they were writ, and apply them to our selves or others without respect had to the differences of those times and cases. Sundry things in Scripture spoken agreeably to that Infancy of the Church, would very ill sute the Church in her fulness of strength and stature, and sundry directions very expedient in time of persecution; and when believers were mingled with Infidels, would be very unseasonably urg'd, when the Church is in a peaceable flourishing state, living under the protection of Christian Princes; now the Apostles whole discourse in this Chapter, and wherever else he toucheth upon the point of scandal, is to be understood only in that case, where men are left to their own liberty, in the use of indifferent things. The *Romans* and *Corinthians*, and others to whom he wrote, being not limited any way, in the exercise of their liberty, by any over-ruling authority. But where the Magistrate hath interposed, and hath imposed laws on those under him, whereby

Hookers *Eccl Pol* l.2.p.49.

whereby their liberty is not infring'd in the inward Iudgment, but limited in the outward exerciſe, there the caſe is altered. So that ſuch a forbearance which as to them was neceſſary, unto us is unlawful, in regard they were free and we are bound.

The next thing to be inquir'd into is this,

6. Whether ignorance of the Law *be ſufficient to exempt us from guilt in the violation of the* Law *?*

I ſhall reſolve this in theſe following Propoſitions.

1. Though every ſin be attended with guilt, leaves a tincture of filth upon the ſoul, and expoſe to puniſhment, yet ſome ſins are more diſpleaſing and diſhonourable to God, and deſtructive to our ſelves then others. Though every ſin deſerves Gods wrath and curſe, both in this life, and that which is to come, yet all ſins are not equally heinous; but ſome ſins in themſelves, and by reaſon of ſeveral aggravations, are more hainous in the ſight of God then others. To ſin through wilfulneſs, is

worſe

worſe then to ſin through weakneſs, to ſin preſumptuouſly, and againſt knowledge, is worſe then to ſin through ignorance. This the Scripture plainly aſſerts, *To him that knows to do good, and doth it not, to him it is ſin*; Jam. 4. 17. *he that knoweth his Maſters Will, and doth it not, ſhall be beaten with many ſtripes.* Luke 12. *It were better for them not to have known the way of righteouſneſs, then afterward to turn from the holy Commandment.* 2 Pet. 2. 21. Sins againſt knowledge do far tranſcend ſins of ignorance; for,

1. A general repentance will ſerve for the one, not ſo for the other; *Davids* murder and adultery muſt be particularly confeſſed and repented of; but his ſins of ignorance in the lump and in general, as is intimated, *Pſalm* 19. 12. *Who can underſtand his errors? Cleanſe me from my ſecret ſins*, that was confeſſion enough. A man may lie in a ſin he doth not know to be a ſin, and be in a ſtate of grace, as the Patriarks in Polygamy and Divorce, but to lie in a ſin againſt knowledg,

is not compatible with grace, ſins againſt knowledge muſt be confeſſed, hated and forſaken, or we cannot have mercy.

2. Some kind of ſinning againſt knowledge excludes from mercy, which doe ignorantly leave a capacity for it, perſecuting the Church, blaſpheming Chriſt; if done ignorantly, leavs a capacity for mercy; if done knowingly, it doth not; I did it ignorantly through unbelief, therefore I obtained mercy, implying, if he had done it knowingly, he had been incapacitated for mercy. If we ſin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, then there remains no more ſacrifice for ſin; for ſins againſt the law, though againſt knowledge, there was an atonement: but its not ſo under the Goſpel, the Apoſtle ſaith expreſly, there remains no more ſacrifice for ſin.

1 *Tim.* 1. 13.

Heb. 10 27 *Lev.* 6. 8.

3. Sinning againſt knowledge is nigheſt to the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt; I doe not ſay it is the ſin, but its nigh it, knowledge is the parent of it; If after they have received the knowledge of the truth. This appears from *Davids* prayer, firſt he prays to be cleanſed from ſecret

Pſal. 19. 12.

ſins,

sins, which he makes sins of ignorance, then prayeth against presumptuous sins, which as the opposition discovers, are sins against knowledge; of these he saith, if these get the Dominion over me, I shall not be free from the great offence, that is, that unpardonable sin which shall never be forgiven.

4. To sin against knowledge, is to sin against the greatest mercy, and the best means; it being the immediate guide of man in all his ways; God rules man by knowledge, and knowledge makes men capable of sin, which beasts are not; knowledge layeth a further obligation to obedience; its a sin to transgress the law when a man knows it not; yet when he knows it, it is a greater; though in sinning against knowledg, a man doth not commit two distinct sins; yet the knowledg of it doth add a further degree of sinfulness; cloth is the same cloth when white, as when dy'd with a scarlet dy, yet then it hath a tincture given it, which is of more worth then the cloth. So when you sin, not knowing the Law, the sin is the same for substance it would be if you had

had known it, yet the knowledge makes it a ſcarlet ſin, far greater in demerit then the ſin it ſelf. The reaſon is this, becauſe laws then come to be in force when they are promulged and made known, ſo that the more they are made known, the more is the force of their building, and ſo the greater guilt, and ſtill the more clearly we know them, the obligation increaſeth, and the guilt enſuing.

5. When the Law being known is broken, there is more contempt caſt upon the law, and the lawgiver, and ſo a higher degree of ſinning, therefore it is ſaid *Numb.* 15. 30. he that ſins ont of knowledge reproacheth the Lord, and diſpiſeth the word of the Lord; therefore *Sauls* ſinning againſt knowledge, is called rebellion, and paralleld with witchcraft; when people ſin againſt light, they are ſaid to rebel againſt the light; in ſinning againſt knowledg, men are ſaid to ſin before the face of the Lord, what a great contempt of God is this? To ſin againſt knowledg is to caſt Gods law behind our back.

Num 15. 30.

Job 24. 13

6. The more knowledge a man ſins againſt, the more the will of the ſinner

is

is discovered to be for sin, as sin. Now *voluntarium est regula & mensura actionum moralium*, willingness in sinning, is the standard and measure of sin, the less will, the less sin, and so much is added, by how much the will is more in it, therefore the highest degree of sinning, is expresst by sinning wilfully, and this after knowledge. An ignorant man commits the act as willingly, yet he commits it not considered as sin, but when its discovered to be a sin, & clearly so discovered, and yet commits it, the will may be said to joyn with it as sin. Thus we may understand that place to him that knows to doe good, and doth it not, to him it is sin, because by his knowledge, the thing is represented as sin, so that he closeth with it the more under that notion and apprehension.

7. In sinning against knowledge a man condemns himself, but when out of ignorance meerly, the law only condemns him; so that a man having knowledge, in that wherein he judgeth another, he condemneth himself; now as self-murther is the highest degree of murther, and an aggravation of it, so self-condemning must needs be reckoned, *Rom.* 2. 1. *Rom.* 14.

God

God took it as a great advantage over him that hid his talent, out of thine own mouth I will condemn thee, thou wicked servant.

To transgress Gods law knowingly, is a greater sin then to transgress it through ignorance. But

2. Though sins against knowledge are greater then sins of ignorance, yet there is an ignorance that is damnable. *John* 17.3 If it be life eternal to know God and Christ, it is death eternal to be ignorant of them. 2*Cor.* 4.3. If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, they are a *Isa* 27.11. people of no understanding, therefore 2*Thes* 1.8 he that made them will not have mercy on them. Ba. *Misch. of Self-ignor.* Mr. *Baxter* tells us, that there is an ignorance and unacquaintedness with God, and our selves, that is doleful and damnable. As 1. To be totally ignorant of the excellency and capacity of your immortal souls. 2. To be void of the effectual knowledge of your sin and misery, and need of the remedy. Ferg. *of the necessity and verity of the satisf. of Christ.* 3. To think you have saving grace when you have none; that you are regenerate by the Spirit, when you are only Sacramentally regenerate by Baptism. Mr. *Ferguson* saith, there are some truths ne-

necessary to be known and believed, in order to our being saved. This depends upon the necessary connection which God hath established, between such a doctrine and such an end; so that happiness is not to be arrived at, but through the knowledge and belief of such a truth; so that their nescience, or pure ignorance, is damning. To be ignorant of God, his Attributes, Covenant, of his Law, and Gospel, of his Son, this is damnable. The *Jews* were ignorant of the Lord of life, else they would not have crucifyed him yet his blood lieth heavy upon them to this day; but your ignorance and disobedience to the Gospel is more inexcusable then theirs. The Disciples might have something to plead for their ignorance, because the great things of the Gospel were not revealed to them; but your ignorance of the Birth, Life, Death, Resurrection, Intercession of Christ, and the rest of the great Articles of the Christian Faith, is damnable, because so clearly revealed in Scripture, that by Moral diligence in reading the Bible,

Bible, you may attain to the knowledge of them; but you have our preaching superadded to Scripture-Revelation, if you be now ignorant you have no cloak nor excuse for your ignorance.

3. To be ignorant of those things we ought to know, and which we may know, if we will, is not only a sin, but a twisted comprehensive sin; now the Commandements and laws of the Gospel, are such as we ought to know, and may know if we will be at the pains; and therfore its a comprehensive sin for

1. There is disobedience in it, for
Deut. 6.6. Gods end in writing to us the great things of his law, is that we may acquaint our selves with them, therefore besides the ordinary course of reading by the *Levites* in the Temple, they were commanded to bind them as signs upon their hands upon the posts of their houses and gates, to the end the law might become familiar to them, its a manifest contempt of Gods command to be ignorant.

2. There is ungratitude and unthankfulness in it, its an abuse of Gods kindness; should a King write a letter to the meanest of his Subjects, nay, a Trai-

Traitor, and promise upon his submission, not onely to pardon his offence, but receive him into favour, should this man lay aside this letter, and not vouchsafe to peruse it, what a piece of ingratitude, presumption, intollerable insolence, would this be; but yours is ingratitude in a higher degree, when God hath writ to you enemies a gracious letter of reconcilement, desiring to win you, when its fitter you should with tears of blood importune him, yet for you to undervalue such unutterable kindness, and not read over this letter, and yet pretend ignorance, this ignorance adds to your guilt.

3. Its a neglect of your own private good; Gods design as I told you before in giving Laws, is to lead you to happiness. *I gave them statutes and ordinances, which if a man do, he shall live in them. You are willing to know those things that concern your temporal good, and will you be ignorant of those things which concern your eternal well-doing.

*Ezek 20. 11.

4. Our ignorance of new-Testament commands is a greater sin then the *Jews* ignorance of the old Testa-

Teſtament-diſpenſation; for they lived in the Infancy of the Church, when it was under a dark diſpenſation, and ſharp Schoolmaſter; We live in the fulneſs of time, when the Church is come to greater maturity of Judgment, and underſtanding; a great many things were veil'd to them, which are revealed to us. Theirs was a miniſtration of death and condemnation; ours, life, righteouſneſs and ſalvation. *How ſhall we eſcape if we neglect ſo great ſalvation.* If God were ſo ſevere againſt the violation of a far meaner inſtitution, as the Law of *Moſes*; ſurely he will be more ſevere againſt the violation of a higher inſtitution, ſuch as the Laws of Chriſt are. See Dr. *Stillingf.* Serm. on *Heb.*2.3.

*Dr. Stillingf. Heb.*2.3.

4. No ignorance excuſeth, but when it is no fault to be ignorant; culpable ignorance cannot excuſe one ſin, cannot excuſe another. Now I a peal to your own conſciences, whether it be not a very great fault, to be ignorant of the Laws of your Creator and Redeemer, without the knowledge of which you cannot be ſaved; the knowledge of which is neceſſary in order to your

your being and doing good.

There are only these two things which makes ignorance of the Laws of God not to be a fault.

1. Want of natural capacity. 2. Want of sufficient means.

1. Want of natural capacity, supposing it be real, and not pretended; some will tell us they have mean capacities, dark understandings, weak memories, yet we see they have wit and memory enough for other matters; that which is good at one thing would be so at another, if employ'd; but they have no heart to spiritual matters, their understanding and memory is good enough, and would be better, if well employed. Therefore this want of natural capacity is but pretended not real. Again, where this want of capacity is natural, and not adventitious nor contracted, many weaken their understanding, and memories, by their vitious lives, by wine and women, and this is so far from excusing, that it aggravates; many lose their parts by not using or abusing them; but

But when this defect is natural, when a man is born an Idiot, and is not *Compos mentis*, then to be ignorant is no fault.

2. Another thing which makes ignorance no fault, is want of ſufficiency in the means of knowledge; If it be not clear to them in the diligent uſe of moral means; Ignorance of the poſitive Laws of God, and of the Goſpel is excuſable; among the poor *Indians*, who never had the Goſpel preacht among them; let them uſe never ſo much induſtry in ſearching after knowledge, they can never come to know Chriſt crucifi'd, for how ſhall they know or believe in him, of whom they have not heard; but you have heard of Chriſt, and he is evidently ſet forth crucify'd, not only in the relation you have of his death and ſufferings by the four Evangeliſts, but in the Sacrament of the Lords Supper; for you to be ignorant is a ſin with a witneſs; your ignorance cannot be *ignorantia puræ negationis*, but *pravæ diſpoſitionis*; its not *ignorantia invincibilis*, but *vincibilis*; not *ignorantia craſſa*, but *affectata*. Its an affected ignorance, and may be overcome. It proceeds from a depraved diſpoſi-

disposition. The disciples might be excus'd in their ignorance of several fundamental Articles, because not reveal'd in that clearness; But now what is necessary to salvation is so plainly discovered, that there cannot be invincible ignorance in such matters.

He that professeth himself to be a friend to men of all religions, yet really to none but those of the Romish Religion, would fain perswade the world that there is nothing clear and certain, either in naturals or spirituals, and tells we are so far from being assured, of the verity of the Scriptures, the being of God, and truth of his Attributes, that we are ignorant of our own being, Immortality of our souls, and future bliss. But Popery is a strange Religion that must be ushered in by Atheism, helpt forward by ignorance, secured by inquisitions and cruelty, which offers affronts to humane reason, requires blind obedience, and cannot be supported without a pretended infallibility; but whatever *Papists* say, the great substantials of the Chiristian Religion are clearly revea-

Fiat lux page 66.

led, to ſay they are obſcure is to accuſe God of want of wiſdom and goodneſs. Gods end in giving us the Bible is, that we may know his will and our duty. If this be ſo obſcure, that we cannot come to any certainty, then God hath loſt his end, and we the benefit. There are, I know, ſeveral things in the Scripture, which we cannot come to a reſult in, but they are not matters neceſſary to be known, believed, or obeyed; and ignorance in matters not neceſſary, will not hinder our ſalvation.

Dr. Stillingf. Rat. Account of the grounds of the Prot. Relig. c. 2. p 60.

5. Sufficiency of means in order to knowledge, is not to be judg'd by the event; but by the improveableneſs of the means, becauſe ſome are children in underſtanding, ever learning, and never come to the knowledge of the truth, but ſtill need to be taught, which are the firſt Principles of the Oracles of God, doth it therefore follow they have not ſufficient means of knowledge. Some that worſhip imaginations, and are wedded to a party, that are full of partiality, prejudice, ſelf-conceit and ſelf-love; impute peoples ignorance, impiety, non-proficiency

ency in goodness, to the want of that which they call powerful preaching, and to the weakness and unprofitableness of those men and means they enjoy. This will prove a poor plea at the great day. God will not judge as we do, who are blinded with self-love, and biass'd with self-interest. Many neglect and contemn the means, are senseless and secure, shut their eyes, are resolv'd to entertain no doctrine, that thwarts their opinion, interest and corruption. God will not judge of men according to the event, but the Improveableness of means. God may for any thing I know call men to an account, for not improving means to that height which others have done in the same capacity; we must consider the end they were design'd for, the improveableness of them, and make our best advantage of them.

6. Where matters are clear, means sufficient, ignorance is so far from excusing, that it aggravates; they must needs be blind who shut their eyes, that they may sin with more freedom, and sin hath a strong hold in those who oppose the light, and hate them that

reprove them, ſome are ſtupidly inſenſible in matters of Religion, refuſing light, and neglecting means. This is the condemnation that men love darkneſs, pleaſe themſelves in it, prefer it before light; ignorance that is wilful and contracted excuſeth not.

7. Whether in thoſe matters where we have no Law, no Precept or prohibition Divine, there we are at our liberty?

Where we are not determined by the poſitive law of God, or of lawful humane authority, there we are at our own liberty, to doe or not to doe, yet in matters indifferent there is a choice. 1 Cor. 6. 12 *All things are lawful to me, but all things are not expedient*; and in determining what is expedient and convenient, I am not if I be guided by my own or anothers diſcretion and not by Scripture; they abuſe the Scripture who tell us Scripture muſt determine us, in indifferent things; If the Scripture determine us its not indifferent, but many things are undetermined by Scripture, not only which concern the

Hooker *Eccle. Polity* Bo. 2. *pag.* 34. *in neweſt edition.*

the actions of common life, but the worship of God, the Scripture hath not determined me the time, place, posture, phrase, method, habit with reference, to prayer, therefore I may be determined by my own, or the discretion of others in these matters, without sin, what is neither commanded nor forbidden by Gods law, I may doe or leave undon, though from Authority negatively in matters of fact, there be no force, yet Authority negatively in matter of law, is of great force; as thus we doe not read Christ and his Apostles did such a thing, therefore it is not to be done. This kind of arguing is invalid, for it is not the purpose of the Holy Ghost to register in Scripture whatever his servants had done, much less their sports and recreations; but in matters of faith, it holds, because the Scripture contains all matters of faith, and in matter of law it holds. We read of no law or precept commanding us to doe it, therefore we may let it alone; we read of no prohibition forbidding it, therefore it may be done, you cannot assure me that that is a necessary duty, by a doctrinal antece-

M. Downs *his Treatise of the lawfulness of lots.*

dent neceſſity, for which you cannot produce a Scripture-command: You cannot aſſure me that that is a ſin, which is not prohibited by Scripture; to make that a duty which Scripture hath not made a duty, is poſitive ſuperſtition: to make that a ſin which the Scripture hath not made ſin, is negative ſuperſtition. It appears therfore, that where we have no divine law there we are at our liberty.

1. From Gods intention in making known his Will, which was not to record every particular fact done by Chriſt and his Apoſtles: for Saint *John* ſaith in the cloſe of his Goſpel, *that many things were done by Chriſt, which if they were written the world would not contain the Books.* But his deſign is to lay down thoſe ſtanding laws whereby the world is to be ruled; and in order to the obligation of Conſcience, there muſt be a promulgation of theſe laws.

2. This appears from the intention and end of laws, which is to circumſcribe and reſtrain the natural liberty

berty of man, therefore where there is not a particular prohibition, it is in nature and reason supposed that men are left to their natural freedom. As Gods forbidding *Adam* to taste of the fruit of one tree, did give him liberty to taste of all the rest. Those things are therefore lawful to be done, which God hath not thought fit to forbid. This appears also

3. From the nature of man, who is a reasonable being, and so able to guide himself in natural and moral actions. In matters necessary to salvation, God hath given us a compleat rule; but in matters of a lower nature, he hath left us to the light of reason, and rule of discretion; before the Scriptures were written, it pleased God by visions and dreams, and other like revelations, to make known his good pleasure to the Patriarks and Prophets, by them to the people with a kind of revelation; served them to all intents and purposes, whereunto the sacred Scriptures now

doe us, now as it was unreasonable in them, to expect any immediate revelation from God, every time they did eat or drink, bought or sold, or did any other common action of life; no less unreasonable is it for us to expect the like warrant from Scripture, for the doing the like actions. No doubt the law of nature and light of reason was the rule they were guided by in such actions. Therefore the wisdom of God left it as a relique of his decayed Image in us, and surely he never infused any power into any creature whereof he intended no use.

8. *Whether Scripture Examples, Divine acts, and Divine approbation have the force of a Divine Law, considered without Divine precepts.*

I shall only take a little notice of the first of these, because there is enough said already by an incomparable Person of this Subject, and because I would hasten to the next particular which is more profitable and edifying.

1. It is most certain that all Scripture Examples doe not oblige us to follow them, therefore Example doth not

not bind as Example, for then all Examples must be followed; and so we shall of necessity goe *qua itur non qua eundum*, walk by the most examples and not by Rule, that all Scripture Examples doe not oblige appears by these Arguments. For

1. It were sin to follow some examples recorded in Scripture, some examples are forbidden, therefore we are not obliged to imitate all examples recorded in Scripture, you will say they therefore doe not oblige because prohibited, but this prohibition proves that all examples doe not bind, and that examples as examples doe not bind, but the examples of Christ, and his Apostles, and other examples not prohibited doe not they oblige, not all such examples. For

2. Many things were done by the Apostles without any intention of obliging any, who succeeded them afterwards to doe the same, as for instance their going abroad so unprovided as they did, when Christ sent his twelve Apostles out at first, it would argue no great wisdom now to draw that pattern into practise, of the like nature was

Paul's

Pauls preaching ἀδάπανον εὐαγγέλιον to ſome Churches receiving no maintenance from them, he never intended that this ſhould oblige, for he ſaith, it was lawful for him to receive maintenance from the Churches, he preached to, yea, he ſets himſelf to prove not only the lawfulneſs of Miniſters taking it, but the duty of peoples giving it; meer Apoſtolick practice doth not bind, becauſe the Apoſtles did many things without intention of binding others.

1 Cor. 9. 6.

3. The Apoſtles did many things upon particular occaſions, emergencies, and circumſtances, which things ſo done cannot bind by vertue of their doing them, any further, then a parity of reaſon doth conclude the ſame things to be done in the ſame circumſtances. Thus *Pauls* ſingle life is far from binding the Church, it being no univerſal practice of the Apoſtles by a Law, but only a thing taken up by him, upon ſome particular grounds, not of perpetual and univerſal concernment; Community of

1 Cor. 9. 5.

Goods

Goods was uſed at firſt by the Church of *Jeruſalem*, as moſt ſuitable to the preſent ſtate of that Church, but it did not obtain among other Churches, as is clear in the Church of *Corinth*, by their Law-ſuits. So the Apoſtles, preaching from houſe to houſe was, for want of conveniency of more publick places, though that practice binds now as far as the reaſon doth, *viz.* in its tendency to the promoting the work of ſalvation.

4. There were Offices of Apoſtolical Appointment, which are grown wholly out of uſe in the Church, without mens looking upon themſelves as bound now to obſerve them, as the widows of the Churches, afterwards from their Office called Deaconeſſes of the Church, of which number *Phœbe* was one, whom *Paul* calls the Deaconeſs of the Church at *Cenchrea*; So both *Origen* and *Chryſoſtome* underſtand it; theſe continued in the Church for ſome Centuries, mentioned by ſeveral Writers, yet theſe are laid aſide by the pretenders

1 Tim. 5. 9.

Rom. 16.

tenders to hold cloſe to Apoſtolical practice, ſo that they that plead ſo much for the obligatory nature of Apoſtolical practice, doe not think it obligatory, for if they did how comes this office of Widows and Deaconeſſes to be neglected, you will ſay theſe are not uſeful now, then we muſt ſay that Apoſtolick practice binds no further then we judge it uſeful.

5. Rites and Cuſtoms Apoſtolical are altered, therefore it doth not bind; for if it did there could be no altering of things agreeable thereto. Dipping in Baptiſm, the uſe of love Feaſts, community of Goods, the holy Bliſs, called *Signaculum orationis*, none look upon themſelves as bound to obſerve them now, and yet all acknowledge them to have been the practiſe of the Apoſtles.

6. There are the mediatory acts, and miraculous acts of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, which none muſt, nor can imitate; all this abundantly proves that all Scripture examples do not bind us to follow them. But

2. It the law making it a duty to follow Examples which gi eth a

Divine

Divine Right to Examples and not barely the examples themselves; we are bound to follow Christs example, not barely because he did such and such things (for many things he did which we are not bound to follow him in) but because he himself hath by a command made it our duty to follow him, in his humility, patience, self-denyal.

*Mat.*11.28
1 *Joh.*2.6.
1 *Pet.*2.22

3. The obligatory force of examples must be resolved either into the moral nature of the action, or a positive law; either from the equity and reasonableness of the thing in its own nature, or because God hath commanded it, which is reason sufficient example in actions not moral bind not at all, therefore example binds by vertue of the morality of it; or if they be not of a moral nature, yet if the thing be elsewhere commanded, the example binds by vertue of the command, the meekness, humility, fasting, praying of Christ doe not oblige us because done by Christ, for then we must imitate him in all he did, then we must ride upon Asses, and have *Hosanna* proclaimed before us, as that blasphemous *Quaker* had, then we must fast 40 dayes and

and nights, as its reported another attempted to doe, but kill'd himſelf; and raiſe the dead if we can, as another attempted, but in vain. I ſay, therefore they do not oblige as examples, but for the morality of them, or becauſe God hath commanded them. We ſhould imitate Chriſt in humility, becauſe of the morality of it, and for the command. We muſt imitate Chriſt in praying and faſting in the ſubſtance, not in the circumſtance, becauſe the ſubſtance is commanded, not the circumſtances; All are obliged to pray, but not to ſpend whole nights in prayer; all are obliged to faſt, but not to faſt fourty days and nights; it is therefore moſt clear, that examples as examples do not bind, but by vertue of the morality and reaſonableneſs of the thing, or becauſe God hath commanded them. I paſs over this, and what may be ſaid of divine acts, and divine approbation, becauſe incomparable Dr. *Stillingfleet* hath done it ſo ſatisfactorily.

Dr. Stil-Irenicum. 1. part. cap. 1 pag. 23. cap. 6. part. 2. page 341.

9. I

9. I shall now consider what dishonour is done to God, and what evils and inconveniences we doe bring upon our selves by sin, which is the transgression of Gods Law.

1. For the dishonour done to God, as glorifying God more then the enjoying him for ever, though they cannot be separated, should oblige us to obedience; so the consideration of the dishonour done to God, should be more prevailing to deter and keep us from sin, then the evils and inconveniences we bring upon our selves. Yet love of heaven more then love of God, fear of hell more then fear of displeasing God, prevails most with selfish sinful creatures. Therefore I shall consider both; and if these two will not prevail nothing will prevail; Will ever that man be good, whom the love of God or hopes of Heaven will not make so, or will ever that man leave his sins, whom the fears of Gods displeasure, or of hell will not make do it, what

other

other Argument can we imagine ſhould have power and influence on men, if theſe have not; if an Angel from Heaven, or one from the dead, ſhould come and preach to you, would not heſe be their arguments to perſwade you to forſake ſin, and follow ſanctity. If you will not believe Gods word, you will not believe though one ſhould ariſe from the dead, I ſhall conſider ſin as it reſpects God firſt; there is more violence, injury, and injuſtice, offered to God in the tranſgreſsion of the leaſt Commandement, then the worth of the whole creation can be able to expiate; what guilt and filthineſs, and diſhonor to God is there then in the greateſt ſins. If your actions be mountains, what heart is able to comprehend the vaſtneſs of monntainous ſins If fooliſh jeſting, vain thoughts, raſh and cauſeleſs anger, be ſo bad, what are ſpeculative yea, practiſed adulteries, rebellious thoughts, froward, haughty, hateful imaginations, contempt of God, reproaching his word, reviling and railing at his meſſengers, quenching the ſpirit, think as meanly and ſlightly of ſin as you will, ſwallow it without fear, live

live in it without sence, commit it without remorse, yet it wrung out prodigious drops of sweat from Christ, who knew nothing of the pollution of it, knew it onely by imputation. Sin its enmity to God, abstracts carries essences, its as directly contrary to God as any thing can be, wicked men are called θεομάχοι, Haters of God, enemies of the cross of Christ, enemies by wicked works, not to love God, and transgress his laws are all one, Christ makes it all one, not to love him, and not to keep his sayings; to refuse subjection, and to be enemies, are all one, sin makes us enemies to the will of God, by rejecting his Word, to his Spirit by withstanding his opertations; to the notions of God, by disliking and suppressing the thoughts, and knowledge of him; to the righteousness of God, by setting up our own works and merits; to the ways of God, by fulfilling our own lusts and wicked works; Enemies to the servants of God, in persecutions, and cruel

Rom. 30. *Phil.*3.18 *Col.*1 21. *Joh.*14.24 *Luk.*19. 27.

ings. Sin is contrary to God, and all that is his, contrary to his exiſtence, and being God, it makes men hate him, as he that hateth his Brother is a murderer, ſo he that hates God, may be ſaid to be a murderer of him, *peccatum eſt Deicidium.*

Sin is contrary to all Gods Attributes, which are his Name; men are jealous of their names, Gods Name is Himſelf; ſin makes people ſlight Gods goodneſs, and ſeek happineſs in the creature, depoſeth his Soveraignty, ſets up other Gods before his Face, contemns his Truth, Power and Juſtice, turns his Grace into wantonneſs.

Sin is contrary to whatever is dear to him, To his Laws and Ordinances, God never gave law, but it hath been broken by ſin, ἀνομία, is the definition of it, yea its called deſtroying of the law, now Gods law the leaſt title of it is more dear to him than all the world, for ere the leaſt title of it ſhall be broken, Heaven and Earth ſhall paſs. Sin is con-

contrary to Gods Favourites, God hath a little flock upon whom he hath set his love, on these sin hath set its hatred, contrary to Gods Image, even in mans own breast, the law of the members fights against the law of the mind, and endeavours to expel it, though a man should be damn'd for it. A man hateth himself as Holy so far as sinful. Gal. 5. 17.

Is not this a marvellous great dishonour to God. that his creatures should rebel against him, be enemies to him, hate him, resist his will, quench his Spirit, suppress the knowledge of him, wish he were not, slight his goodness, contemn his power, provoke his Justice, turn grace into wantonness, break and destroy his Law, can there be a greater affront offered to the divine Majesty then this. All these things clearly demonstrate that sin is a great dishonour to God. Lets now consider what are the evils and inconveniences it brings upon our selves.

1. It debaſeth and diſhonours our ſouls; the nobleſt creature under heaven, and higheſt allied, made to be a companion fit for God himſelf. Sin hath ſtript us of our native excellency, aa it did *Reuben*, made the ſoul a drudg and ſlave to every creature it was made to rule. Therſore the Prodigal is ſaid to ſerve ſwine, feed on huſks, every vanity maſters it. Therefore ſome are ſaid to be ſervants to wine, ſervants to riches, and divers luſts. Hence it is that ſhame attends ſin, now ſhame ariſeth out of an apprehenſion of ſome excellencie debaſed, and by how much the excellencie is greater, by ſo much the ſhame is greater. Therefore unutterable confuſion will one day befal ſinners, becauſe ſin is the debaſement of an invaluable excellencie.

*Gen.*49.41

2. *It* robs us of Gods *Im*ge, deprives us of the glory of God, the Image of Gods holineſs, which is his beauty and ours, though man in innocency had all perfections united in him *via eminentiæ*, that are to

*Rom.*3.23

to be found in other creatures, yet this was more worth then all; all the reſt made him not like God as this did; yea, it hath rob'd us even of God himſelf; your ſins ſeparate between you and me, and in robbing us of God, it robs us of all things. *Iſa.* 59. 1.

3. It is polluting and defiling, its compared to the blood and polution of a new-born child, before it be cut, waſht or ſwadled; to the rottenneſs of man in his grave, to that noiſom ſteam and poiſonous exhalation which breaths from the mouth of open Sepulchres. Its compared to dung and garbage; This pollution conſiſts in two things. *Ezeck.* 16. 6.

1. A privation of the beauty which the Image of God brought into the ſoul with it; A non-conformity to the brightneſs and holineſs of the Law. Sin is a ſwerving from the Law, not only as our rule but beauty, ſo that it is the ſtain and pollution of the ſoul.

2. A poſitive foulneſs, introducing the *Image* of ſin and Satan, defiledneſs of mind and conſcience.

Rom 5.17. One ſin defiles the ſoul; one offence polluted *Adam* and all the world; it defiles in an inſtant, as ſoon as ever it fell into *Adam*, it ſtript him of his glory. Its like that poiſon with which *Nero* kill'd *Germanicus*, as ſoon as it was received it kill'd him. This Pollution hath theſe four ill qualities.

1. Its a deep pollution, of a ſcarlet tincture, that will not wear out. 2. Univerſal pollution of fleſh and ſpirit. 3. Spreading pollution, it ſpreads in a mans ſelf, ſpreads it ſelf upon others. 4. An eternally killing

Jer. 2.22. pollution; its *æterna macula*, a ſtain which no nitre, or ſoap, or any creature can waſh off. *It* is poiſonous and deadly, it puts horrour into the Law, venom into the Goſpel, hatred into God, fire into hell, and hell into the Conſcience.

4. *It* makes us impotent and unable to do any good. Our natural

ſin-

sinful state is without any strength, so weak that it makes the Law it self weak. As unable we are to do the work of a spiritual life, as a dead man of a natural life; for we are by nature dead in sin, he'd under it. This is a woful aggravation of a state of sin, that a man lieth in mischief, as a carcass in rottenness and dishonour, without any power to deliver himself. So great an impotency doth it bring, that we are not sufficient to think a good thing, nor able to understand a good thing, nor comprehend the light when it shines upon us. Our tongues unable to speak good, our ears unable to hear good, our whole man unable to obey.

Rom. 5.6 Rom. 8 3. Eph. 2. 1. Rom. 7. 6. 2 Cor. 3 5 1 Cor. 2. 14 Mat. 12 34 Jer. 6. 10.

5. *It* makes us slaves, and keeps people in bondage. It exerciseth a reigning Kingly power over those that are in a state of Sin, they being agents in sin, Voluntiers under this King; It exerciseth a tyrannical power over converted ones,

they being Patients, rather then Agents; ſome ſell themſelves, and become willingly the ſervants of ſin; ſome are in bondage to ſin, as the creatures are to vanity, not willingly, but by reaſon of his act, who had ſubjected them long before. Sin exerciſeth an arbitrary power in the ſoul; its all will, therefore call'd the will of the fleſh, the will of the Gentiles, the will of men; for ſins will and mans will in thoſe who are unſanctified, are all one: Sin brings us under a curſe, expoſeth to wrath, fights and wars againſt us; it was the firſt Founder of hell, laid the firſt corner-ſtone thereof; it hath hurld confuſion over the world, brought a vanity and curſe upon the creature.

Rom. 2. 3
Gal 5. 17.
1 *Pet.* 2. 11

6. It makes our beſt things bad; it doth not only cleave to our natures, but derives venome upon every action that comes from us. Though we do not ſay as *Bellarmine*, *Keliſon*, and *Becanus* miſreport us, that the good works of the

Bell. de juſt. lib. 4. *c* 20. *Keliſons ſurvey lib.* 6. *c* 5. Becanus *Tom.* 1. *ty.* 6.

the regenerate are ſins, and ſo hateful to God, which were to reproach the ſpirit and grace of Chriſt by which they are wrought; yet to the beſt works that are done by the concurrence of our faculties; ſuch a vitiouſneſs doth adhere; ſuch ſtubble of our own is ſuperinduced, that God may juſtly charge us for defiling the grace he gave, and for the evil we mix with them, may turn away his eyes from his own gifts in us. Whenſoever thou art going about any good, this evil will be preſent with thee, to derive a deadneſs, damp, dulneſs, indiſpoſedneſs, upon all thy ſervices, iniquity upon thy holy things, which thou ſtandeſt in need of a Prieſt to bear for thee, and remove from thee. In the Law, whatſoever an unclean perſon touch't it was unclean, though it was holy fleſh. Such is the ill quality of ſinful nature, that it ſtains and blemiſheth every good work which comes from it. This is that which

in

in thy prayers deads thy zeal, fervency, humiliation, ſelf-abhorrence; thy importunity, faith, cloſe attention, caſts in impertinent thoughts, wrong ends, makes thee reſt in the work done, never enquire after the truth of thine own heart, or Gods bleſſing, and ſucceſs to thy ſervices.

This is that which in reading and hearing Gods Word, throws in prejudice, blindneſs, unbelief, pride, hardneſs, a grudge againſt the Miniſter, if he preach not what pleaſeth thy humor, and ſutes not thy opinions, hence proceeds infidelity, miſconſtruction, wreſting, and ſhaping the word to our ſelves.

This is that which in thy meditations makes thee roving, unſetled, driving to no iſſue, running into no reſolutions of future obedience, in faith and holineſs. I could ſhew you how it corrupts our beſt faculties, fills the mind with

with vanity, ignorance, curiosity, pride, contradiction; the conscience full of impunity, insensibleness, absurd accusations and excusings, the will full of disability to good, yea, loathing aversation, enmity to good, full of obstinacy, contrariety, full of inclinations to ill, resolution to persist in ill. Memory unfaithful to retain good, too tenacious of ill.

7. Sin strikes at the life of God in man, divine nature, holiness, that everlasting principle of grace, which is in the souls of men united to Christ. Now that which strikes at the life of God in man, tends to the death of the soul; and this is sin, it obliterates the reliques of the Life of God in fallen man, and would take away that life that is in the regenerate, were it not for Gods Covenant and Promise.

6 It makes us like the devil, the greater Impress of holiness on the heart, and

and the more it appears outwardly in the life, the more like God. So the greater Impreſs of ſin in the heart, and expreſſion of it in the life, the more like the devil. Sin is of the ſame nature with the devil, the ſame kind of malignity againſt God, by ſin we conſpire with the devil againſt God. All ſinne is from the devil, either originally, or by way of cauſe helping it forward, hence ſinne is called the work of the devil. All ſin is a furthering of the King-
2 *Ti.* 2.26. dom of the devil. It hath a ſuc-
Eph. 4.26. ceſſion by ſinne in the world. Its
John 6.70 a fulfilling the will of the devil; when people ſinne they think they fulfil their own will, but they fulfil the will of the devil; by ſin you turn your ſelves into devils; was it not ſin made the devil a devil. *Ahab* by ſin ſold himſelf, to whom could he by ſinne ſell himſelf but to the devil.

9. Sin brings a curse upon every thing, cursed shall be the earth for thy sake. If thou wilt not hearken to the Lord to keep his commandements, all these curses shall come upon thee; yea, things that are good in themselves shall be turned into a curse; prosperity which is good in it self, to evil men it is a curse; prosperity of Fooles destroyes them. How doth prosperity slay them, by pleasing their sensitive appetites, and so overcoming the power of reason, *perit omne Judicium cum restranſit in affectum*, violent affections hearken not to reason. They make them food to nourish their lusts, they take off the Soul from God, their minds are hereby diverted and hindred from serious matters. Sin turns not only prosperity, but the greatest good into the greatest harm, the means of Grace and Mercys of God into sin. If thou retain the sinfulness of thy heart, the more the evil of sin is discovered, the nigher a Minister Deuter. 28 15.

ſter comes to thy Conſcience, the worſe thou wilt be. Again, ſin is ſelf-murther; O *Iſrael*, thou haſt deſtroyed thy ſelf, he that hateth me loveth death; now to be your own deſtroyers is to ſin againſt the deepeſt principle in your natures, to croſs your own intentions, to do more againſt your ſelves then earth and hell can do; to be falſe to the truſt God hath repoſed in you, to forbid all others to pity you; it will aggravate your torments in hell: *Sin* binds us over to puniſhment, the tranſgreſſing of Gods Law is recompenced with puniſhment. Puniſhment as it relates to ſin, takes in ſeveral things, both with reſpect to God and man.

Mr. *Baxt.* Call to the unconverted.

1. With reference to God who commands; It includes theſe things;

1. A will to which the actions of the ſubject muſt conform, revealed and ſignified under the notion of a Law, for a *Law* is a declaration

ration of Gods Will, concerning matters to be done or left undone.

2. Justice, which wills the punishment of the transgressors of this Law.

3. A power, which is able to put in execution what Justice decrees, and so punish the offender.

2. On the part of the subject commanded.

1. Reason and free-will originally, without which there can be no sin. Mans loss of his free-will doth not make void Gods command. Originally God made no Law to bind under pain of sin, but that unto the obedience whereof he gave reason and free-will.

2. There is a debt and obligation, either by voluntary subjection, as man to man, or natural, as the creature to God, or both sealed and acknowledged in the Covenant between God and man.

3. A forfeiture, guilt and demerit upon the violation of that Law.

4 The

4. The evil it ſelf inflicted where we may conſider, 1. The nature and quality of it, which is to have a deſtructive power, to oppreſs and diſquiet the offender, violate the tranquillity of his well-being; for as ſin is a violation offer'd by man to the law, ſo puniſhment is a violation retorted from the law to man.

2. Proportioning the puniſhment to the nature and degree of the offence, the meaſure of this muſt be taken from the Majeſtie of God offended, excellency of the law violated, quality of the creature offending, eaſyneſs of Primitive obedience, unprofitableneſs of the wayes of ſin.

3. The end of puniſhment, which is not the deſtruction of the creature, whom as a creature God loveth, but the ſatisfaction of juſtice, the declaration of divine diſpleaſure againſt ſin, the manifeſtation of the glory of his power and terror.

Dr. Stilling. ag. Crelius

Now theſe puniſhments are either Spiri-

Spiritual, Temporal, or Eternal.

I. Temporal, and these either without or within.

1. Without a man.

1. The vanity of the creature, which was at first made full of beauty and goodness, but now mourn and groan under the bondage of our sins.

2. Wrath of God, revealing it self from Heaven, Curse of God overgrowing the earth.

2. Within a man, the Harbingers and Forerunners of death, sickness, pain, poverty, reproach, fear, after all death it self.

II. Spiritual, these are threefold.

1. Punishment of loss, separation from favour and fellowship with God, expulsion from Paradise, the seat of Gods Presence and Love.

2. Punishment of sense, immediate strokes of Gods wrath on the soul, wounds of conscience, tasts of vengeance,

which imprints on the ſoul tremblings, fears, amazements.

3 Puniſhment of ſin with ſinne, when God in anger forſakes the ſoul, giveth it over to the phrenſie and fury of luſt, the rage and revenge of Satan, letting men alone to joyn themſelves to idols, and to believe lies, this God doth theſe ways.

1. *Deſerendo*, by forſaking them, that is, taking away his abuſed gifts, ſubſtracting his deſpiſed grace, calling in his grieved ſpirit, removing his Candleſtick, ſilencing his Prophets.

2. *Permittendo*, he ſuffers wicked men to walk in their own ways, becauſe they like not to retain him in their knowledge, nor to live by his Precepts, therefore leaves them to themſelves and their own will.

3. *M-*

3. *Media disponendo*, ordering means, propounding objects, not only to try, but punish the wickedness of men, and bring about his own purposes, out of the sins of men. He accomplished his unchangeable counsel, out of the conspiracy of *Herod*, *Pilate*, and the Jews. *Its* a most excellent speech of Saint *Augustine*, *The Lord inclineth the wills of men, whithersoever pleaseth him, whether unto good, out of his mercy, or unto evil out of their merit; sometimes by his manifest, sometimes secret, but always righteous Judgment, and this is not by his Patience only, but by his Power.*

Deus inclinat voluntates quacunque voluerit, sive ad bona pro misericordia, sive ad mala pro meritis, Judicio utique suo aliquando aperto, aliquando occulto, semper Justo, non per patientiam tantum, sed per potentiam. Aug. Con. Jul. lib. 5. cap. 3.

4. *Perversas voluntates non invitas flectendo, sed spontaneas & sno impetu faciles ulterius Satanæ præcipitandas tradendo*, by giving over perverse,

wilful rebellious ſinners to the rage and will of *Satan*, to hurry them at his pleaſure to further wickedneſs.

3. The puniſhment of ſin is eternal, the laſt day is an eſpecial manner call'd a day of wrath, becauſe then *God* heaps treaſures, ſtorms and tempeſts; this wrath of *God* is of all other moſt inſupportable. In regard of the Author, it comes from *God*, and in its own nature, its moſt heavy and invincible; *Gods* wrath is ſo heavy, that it excludes the ſtrength of nature to overcome it; ſo infinite, that it excludes the hope of nature to eſcape it. *Gods* Juſtice being infinite, the violation thereof in ſin muſt needs contract an infinite demerit and debt; now the ſatisfaction of an infinite debt muſt needs be infinite, either in degrees; but this man cannot ſuffer, becauſe a finite veſſel is not able to hold an infinite wrath, or infiniteneſs of worth, in the perſon ſatis-

satisfying; this is the reason why Christ did not suffer infinitely in time, because of the infinite excellency of his person, or for defect of this infiniteness of time, thus the damned suffer in hell.

10. *I now proceed to those Inferences and Uses which flow from this Scripture.* *Uses.*

1. Is sin the transgression of Gods Law, then its not sins being voluntary or involuntary, that makes it to be sin, but the transgression of Gods Law. If we break Gods Commandements, whether it be knowingly or ignorantly, with or against our wills, we sin; for sin is the transgression of a Law, therefore original sin, though in some sense it be involuntary, yet it being a want of that rectitude the Law of God requires, it is sinful. The Pelagians will needs perswade us that original sin is no sin, for, say they, that which is natural, necessary, and unavoidable, cannot be sin, *Inf.* 1.

now original ſin is natural, and unavoidable, therefore no ſinne. Again, they ſay that which is not voluntary, cannot be ſinful; Original ſin is not voluntary. In anſwer to this *I* ſhall lay down theſe Propoſitions.

1. We muſt take the meaſure of ſin from Gods Law; for the *ratio formalis*, the formality of ſin lieth in its want of conformity, or contrariety to Gods Law. Therfore original ſin, though it be natural, neceſſary and unavoidable, yet becauſe its a want of conformity to Gods Law, it is ſin. The Law is a Law to our Natures as well as life. *If* our Natures be vitiated, and want that rectitude the Law requires, they are ſinful, to ſay our natures are indifferent to good or evil, is to contradict common experience: * Actual ſin is commonly confeſſed and ſhews it ſelf, and ſo doth original ſin in our proneneſs to actual, and in the earlineſs and commonneſs of ſuch evil inclinations, and in the remnants

* See Mr. Baxters divine life. part. 1. p. 89.

nants of it which the sanctified feel, though they are such as were sanctified never so early, before actual sin had time to breed those evil habits, which therefore certainly were born with us.

2. Original sin is not necessary to the Nature in it self considered, but to the nature as proceeding from *Adam*; for *Adam* had free-will, and we in him, and what was to him sinful, is so to us, because we all were one in him. That which is natural or necessary, may be considered two ways; A primitive and created, or consequent and contracted; Its not the later but the former, makes a thing not sinful. But original sin is not natural and necessary; If you respect man in his primitive state, for God made man upright; but this necessity is consequential, and contracted which doth not make it cease to be sinfull.

3. The ſinfulneſs of a thing is grounded on its diſproportion to the *Law* of *God*, not to the will of man; which Law of *God* requires ſtrength as well as will to do what it requires. If there be not doing as well as willing good, the *Law* is tranſgreſt.

4. Original ſin is *ſuo modo* voluntary, becauſe brought in by that will which is originally ours. For this is a true rule in Divinity, *Voluntas capitis totius naturæ voluntas reputatur*, that *Adams* will was the will of all mankinde; Therefore this ſin being voluntary in him, and hereditary to us, is eſteem'd in ſome ſort voluntary to us alſo. Original ſin, though to perſons it be not, yet to the nature it was voluntary, and to the perſons in *Adam*, as in their common father, for with them, otherwiſe then in him, no Covenant could be made; and even in humane *Laws* the acts of Parents can circumſcribe their children.

Inf. 2. 2. Is ſinne the tranſgreſſion of

Gods

Gods Law? Then the Gospel doth not take away the obligation of the Law, nor give us a dispensation to transgress it; If so, it would give us a dispensation to sin, for sin is the transgression of the Law. But the Gospel gives no man a dispensation to sin, and transgress Gods Law. Therefore our Saviour saith, *He came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it*; and therefore in his Sermon on the Mount, he doth not only explain but reinforceth it; *St. Paul* tells us, that faith is so far from making void, that it establisheth the Law; and in his Epistle to the *Galathians*; that the Law is not against the Promises, neither doth the Promises make void the Law. True it is, that Christ is the end of the Law, and that believers are not under the Law, but under grace; yet it is as true, that Christ came not to destroy the Law, and that no jot nor tittle thereof shall fall to the ground. We are not under the Law for Justification

Mat.5.19.

Rom.3.31
Gal.3.

tion of our perſons, as *Adams* or for ſatisfactiou of Juſtice, as thoſe that periſh; but we are under it as a documenr of obedience, and a rule of living. It is now publiſhed from Mount *Sion*, as a law of liberty, and a new law, not as a law of Condemnation and Bondage.

The obedience thereof is not removed, but the diſobedience thereof is pardoned, and cured, neceſſary is the obſervat on thereof as a fruit of Faith, not as a condition of life, or righteouſn ſs, neceſſary it is, *neceſſitate Præcepti*, as a thing commanded, the tranſgreſsing wherof is in curing of ſin, not *neceſſitate medii*, as a ſtrict and indiſpenſable mean of ſalvation, the tranſgreſsion whereof is a peremptory obligation to death. We are indeed by Chriſt brought from under the law, but not as the rule of life, but we are freed from it on other accounts, as from the guilt and damnation that we incurr by tranſgreſsing it; from the law as a covenant of righteouſn ſs, we expecting juſtification from him who is the

Reynolds upon Rom. 7, 9 pag. 145.

Lord

Lord our righteouſneſs, from the rigour of the law, from the curſe of the law, Chriſt being made a curſe for us; from the effects of the ſpirit of bondage which come along with the law; I will mention three effects.

1 To manifeſt to the conſcience that a man is in a damned deſperate condition, inſtead hereof with Chriſt comes the ſpirit of Adoption, and a ſound mind, which ſaith unto the ſoul, that God is our Salvation.

2. To ſtop the mouth, drive out of Gods preſence, leave utterly inexcuſable, that a man ſhall have nothing to alledge, why the curſe ſhould not be poured out; inſtead whereof, we have in Chriſt, free approach into Gods preſence, ſpirit of ſupplication, and leave to plead in Gods Court of mercy.

3. To terrifie and affright the ſoul with a fearful expectation of fiery wrath, inſtead whereof the ſoul is calmed with a ſpiritual ſerenity and peace, which is the beginning of Gods Kingdom, crowned with the joy of faith, firſt fruits of the ſpirit, which

which is the earneſt of our inheritance, from the effects of the ſpirit of bondage we are freed by Chriſt, we are freed from the irritating and provoking power of the Law; reſtraint heightens deſire, and ſin takes occaſion by the Law. Thus the Law is ſaid to ſtrengthen ſin, not *per ſe*, out of the intention of the Law, but by accident *per antiperiſtaſin*, exciting and provoking that ſtrength which is in ſin.

Inf. 3. 3. Is ſin the tranſgreſſion of a Law? then by the Law cometh the knowledge of ſin. *I had not known luſt, unleſs the Law had ſaid, Thou ſhalt not covet, rectum eſt ſui index & obliqui*; we muſt know what is good and bad by this Standard; Ignorance of the Law makes people conceit themſelves, and works very good, when they are marvellous bad. This was Saint Pauls caſe, when he lived after the ſtricteſt ſort of the Phariſees, ſin was dead, he eſteemed himſelf blameleſs; but when the Com-

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mandment came, and discovered its own spiritualness, and the carnalness of his performances, removed his curtail'd glosses, and presumptuous prejudices, the law opened to him the inordinateness of natural concupiscence, shewed how the least atome of sin spots the soul; the smallest omission qualifies for Hell, makes the conscience see those infinite sparkles and swarms of lust, that rise out of the heart; that *God* is all eye to see, and all fire to consume every unclean thing, that the least sin cannot be expiated without the blood of *Christ*; to the law belongs the conviction of sin, and that in the whole compass of evil that is in it; a meer natural light will never thus far convince a man; indeed some things nature it self is sufficient to teach, *God* may be felt and found out in some sense by those that ignorantly worship him, nature doth convince people that they are not so good as they should be; much of the law is written in the hearts of those who know nothing of the letter of it.

Acts 17. 2 *Rom.* 2. 15 *Titus* 1. 12, 13.

Idle-

neſs, Beſtiality, Lying, Luxury, the *Cretian Poet* could condemn in his own country-men, drinking of healths, *ad plenos calices*, by meaſure and conſtraint, condemn'd by the law of a heathen Prince, and that in his luxurie; but theſe remnants of nature in the hearts of men, are like blazes and glimmerings of a candle in a ſocket, there is much darkneſs mingled with it. Natural light without the law doth not convince clearly, univerſally and effectually,

1. Becauſe it doth not carry a man to the root, *Adams* ſin; Saint *Paul* confeſſeth this could not be learnt without the law; meer nature will never teach a man to feel the weight and curſe of a ſin committed 5 thouſand years before himſelf was born, to feel the ſpirits of ſin running in his bloud, and ſprouting out of his nature into his life; it was more then nature brought forth, that confeſſion, I was born in ſin.

Rom. 7. 7.

Pſ 51. 5.

2. Corrupted nature cannot endure to look on the light, but hateth it, though it hath the law to help

help it in the discovery, yet it will not make use of it, and will it doe it without the law, it cannot endure a through scrutinie and ransacking; when it looks on the law its through the mists of its own lusts, and therefore cannot but wrest and torture it to his own way; that sense of the law is truest which most restrains thy corrupt humour, and crosses the imaginations of thy fleshly reason. There is a great contrariety between corrupted nature and the law the law is perfect, right, pure, sure, faithful, holy, just, spiritual, lively, operative, but men by nature are unlike this, degenerate, crooked, wavering, unfaithful, deceiving, & being deceived, unholy, carnal, impure, fleshly minded, dead, reprobate to every good work.

3. Natural light is so darkened, corrupted, vitiated, and infituated, that it sometimes counts evil good and good evil, puts light for darkness, and darkness for light, and som times perswades a man that he is in the right way, when the end there of will be the issues of death; *Esai.* 5. 20 *Prov.* 14. 12.

that

that he is rich and hath need of nothing, when in the mean time he is miſerable, poor, blind and naked; that he is humble, meek, mortify'd, charitable, when its quite contrary. *Plato's* community, *Ariſtotle's* Urbanity and Magnanimity, *Cicero's* blinding the eyes of the Judges, the Stoicks *Apathie*; the ſullenneſs of thoſe rigid Heathens, that pull'd out their eyes that they might be chaſte, and kill'd themſelves to be rid of ill times. Theſe are but filthy and ſinful in Gods ſight. Again, if natural light were ſufficient, the Law of God, and the Spirits illumination were ſuperfluous; its not natural light, but the Law of God muſt convince of ſin effectually.

4. Is ſinne the tranſgreſſion of a Law, then have an eye to the Law; when you are tempted to ſinne, and let that reſtrain you. When thou art tempted to drunkenneſs, whoredom, theft, lying, Sabbath-breaking, or the like; con-

Inf. 4.

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sider with thy self, these are manifest transgressions of the law of God, and how can I doe such things, and sin against God? the law hath two principal uses for which it serves.

1. It hath *rationem Speculi*, it is as a glass to manifest and discover sin and death. The law first convinceth the conscience of its own wideness, as *David* saith, *I have seen an end of all perfections but thy law is exceeding broad*, and then reveals the compass of sin, the wideness and filthiness of sin is discovered; by its disproportion to the purity of that holy Law.

2. The law hath *rationem fræni, & regulæ*, to cohibite and restrain from sin, and to order the life of man. Make use of the law as a looking-glass to see your freckles and deformities for your humiliation, and as a School-master to drive you to Christ. Make use of it as a curb, and set before your eyes the threats of it, to restrain you from sin. Make use of as a rule, and set before your eyes the promises, to engage you to obedience.

Inf. 5. 5. Is ſin the tranſgreſſion of the law? this ſhews then the ignorance and abſurdity of thoſe men, who cry down preaching the law, as a courſe tending to deſpair and diſcontent; how can we tell people of their ſins and tranſgreſsions, but by the law, for ſin is the tranſgreſsion of the law; how can we convince of duty or diſobedience but by the law, which ſhews us what is good and what is evil. To preach the law alone by it ſelf, I confeſs is to pervert the uſe of it, we have no power or commiſsion ſo to doe, for we have our power for edification and not for deſtruction, it was publiſhed as an appendant to the Goſpel, and ſo it muſt be preached, it was publiſhed in the hand of a mediator, it muſt be preacht in the hand of a mediator. But yet we muſt preach the law, and that in its own fearful ſhapes, for though it was publiſhed in mercy, yet it was publiſhed with thunder, fire, tempeſts. This is the method of the Holy Ghoſt to convince firſt of ſin, then to reveal righteouſneſs and refuge

fuge in *Christ*. The law is the forerunner, that makes room, and prepares welcome in the soul for *Christ*.

The reason is, because people are so wedded to their sins, that they must be brought to extremities before they will forsake sin, and accept of mercy. Mad men must be bound before they be cured, so are men in their lusts, fit for *Bedlam*; the law must hamper and shut them up, before the Gospel and the Spirit of liberty be welcome to them. Now this is Gods resolution to humble the soul so low, till it can in truth and seriousness bid *Christ* welcome upon any conditions.

Is sin the transgression of Gods law? then this is the reason why God so much hates it, and so severely punisheth it; its the transgression of his law, it is an affront to his Majesty, contradicting his will, questioning his authority, opposing his Soveraignty; those who are blind and partial doe not see the exceeding *Inf.* 6.

ſinfulneſs of ſin. They think Miniſters beſides themſelves when they are ſo bitter againſt ſin, and count it malice, and that they hyperbolize, when they repreſent ſin in ſuch a miſhapen, filthy dreſs, they are ready to accuſe God of too much ſeverity, his laws of too much rigour, and wonder he ſhould ſentence ſinners to eternal death. They doe not conſider what a haitous thing it is to tranſgreſs the Holy Juſt and Good laws of an infinite Majeſtie, and refuſe ſubjection to their Creator.

Inf. 7. 7. Is ſin the tranſgreſsion of Gods law? Then learn from hence how to Judge of your actions, let not cuſtom, carnal reaſon, intereſt prejudice, be your guide, in iudging of your own and others actions, but the law of God that may be a neceſſary duty, which the world counts a fault, and that may be a hainous impiety, which the world calls civility.

Inf. 8. 8. Hence you may ſee the reaſon why every ſin deſerves death, becauſe

cause its a transgressing Gods law, which hath a condemning as well as commanding power, it curseth and condemn's every one that continueth not in all things written in the law to doe them. *Gal.*3.10.I doe not say, every one that doth actually transgress Gods law, shall be actually cursed and condemned,but he deserves it and shall be condemned, if not pardoned and Justified through Christ.

9. Is sin the transgression of Gods law, then wonder not at the care and circumspection of the Saints and Servants of God, why they set bounds and limits to themselves, its for fear they transgress Gods law, this is the reason why they set a watch before the door of their lips, they are afraid of offending with their tongues. This is the reason why they make a covenant with their eyes, its for fear of transgressing Gods law by lusting after a maid in their hearts. This was the reason why *Joseph* avoided the company of his Mistress, for fear of *Inf.*9.

ſinning againſt God. This was the reaſon of *Solomons* caution *Prov.* 5. 8. *Come not nigh the door of a whores houſe.* It was to prevent the danger of ſin. Hence it is we have ſo many cautions againſt ill company. *Prov.* 4. 14. *Enter not into the path of the wicked, goe not into the way of evil men,* avoid it, paſs not by it, turn from it; this reaſon of this caution is for fear of infection, and being tempted to ſin. We muſt avoid all needleſs ſociety with ſinners, for fear of being led into ſin.

Inf. 10. Is ſin the tranſgreſſion of Gods law? Then ſtand in awe and ſin not; abſtain from evil, and doe good. If iniquity be in thy hand put it far from you. To perſwade you to this, Conſider

1. What a kind of law it is that is violated. Sin is the violation of a law which is holy, juſt, and good, Its holy fit to conform us to the Image of God, Juſt fit to arm us againſt the wrath of God, and Good fit to preſent us unto the preſence and

and fruition of God. A Law which is righteous and reasonable; The greatest part, if not all the Decalogue is founded on the Law of Nature.

5. What is it you have to object against the Law of God, seeing there is but one first cause, and infinite being; the true and living God, who hath made the world and you, and upholds you, who alone can satisfie and save you, why should you think of having any other gods.

This shews the Equity of the first Commandment.

Com. 1. *Thou shalt have no other gods before me*; Seeing God is an invisible, infinite, and eternal spirit, and cannot be described by any Image, and seeing it is fitting he should prescribe his own worship, as knowing what is most acceptable to himself. Why should we make Images, which are doctrines of lies, or worship him by Images, or any other way contrary to his word.

This ſhews the iniquity of tranſgreſsing the Second.

Com. 2. *Thou ſhalt not make unto thy ſelf any graven, &c.* Seeing God is a great God, and Jealous of his Name, and his Name being ſo glorious and fearful, why ſhould we profane and abuſe it, by an unſeaſonable uſe of it in ordinary diſcourſe; by an irreverent uſe of it in Holy things, and by vain and profane ſwearing by it.

The third Commandement is therefore very reaſonable.

Com. 3. *Thou ſhalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltleſs.* Seeing nature it ſelf dictates that God is to be worſhipped, and that ſome conſiderable time is to be ſpent in his worſhip, and ſeeing he who is Lord of time, and of our lives, might have challenged 6 parts of 7, why ſhould we deny him what he requires

quires, seeing he might have required more, and we having more reason then the Jews to give him a seventh part of time, the work of redemption being superadded to the worke of Creation. This shews what a great sin it is to profane the Sabbath, by idleness, or doing that which is in it self sinful, by omission or careless performance of Sabbath-day duties, or by unnecessary thoughts, words, or works, about worldly imployments and recreations.

You see the reasonableness of the fourth Commandement.

COL. 4. *Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it Holy.* Considering that God hath ordained that some should be in authority, some live in subjection, and humane society cannot be maintained without it, why should we break order, and bring confusion into the world, by dishonouring and disobeying our Parents, whether natural, civil or sacred, considering that obedience to our

our Parents tends not only to the lengthening out of the life of that ſociety in which we are imbodyed, but of our own lives and proſperity, without this our lives and fortunes would be at the mercy of thoſe who had moſt might, and not thoſe that have moſt right. The fifth Commandement is your intereſt every way.

Com. 5. *Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days, &c.*

Conſidering that man was made after Gods own Image, and our lives being ſo precious, that all that a man hath he will give for his life; The reverence we ſhould have of the Image of God in others, and that rooted principle of ſelf-love in our ſelves, ſhould oblige us to uſe all lawful endeavours, to preſerve our own life, and the life of our neighbours, you ſee the righteouſneſs and reaſonableneſs of the ſixth Commandment.

Com.

Com. 6. *Thou shalt not kill.*

Considering that God at first made man male and female, and created but one woman for *Adam*; and seeing our members are the members of Christ, why should we sin against our own bodies, and make them the members of a Whore. Considering also that married persons are not only by the Law of God and Nature, but by a voluntary League and Covenant oblig'd to one another, are not all other Leagues abominable. There is therefore nothing of unrighteousness and rigour in the seventh Commandment.

Com. 7. *Thou shalt not commit Adultery.*

Considering that by the Laws of God and man, every one hath a right to his estate and possessions; it must needs be a price of injury and injustice, to steal. All Nations acknowledge the equity of the eighth Commandment.

Com.

Com. 8. *Thou ſhalt not ſteal.*

Seeing a good Name is more conſiderable then riches, and falſhood and lying ſo contrary to that eſſential Attribute in God, his truth, and deſtroys the end of ſpeech, and ſo injurious both to God, and man, you will not queſtion the equity of that law.

Com. 9. *Thou ſhalt not bear falſe witneſs againſt thy neighbour.*

Conſidering that the onely wiſe God knows that we have need of food and rayment, and will not deny us that which he giveth to ravens and lillies, and ſeeing he knows what is fitteſt for us, why ſhould we diſcover diſtruſt of Gods promiſe, and providence, diſcontentment with our condition, an envious ſpirit, inordinateneſs of deſire, by coveting what is another mans. This ſhews the reaſonableneſs of the tenth Commandement.

Com.

Com. 10. *Thou shalt not covet, &c.*

Some Divines say, that nine of the ten Commandements are founded upon the law of Nature, and that natural reason without revelation would have brought us to the knowledge of them. Those seven Precepts of the Sons of *Noah*, which are these 1. The Precept to renounce Idols and all *Idolatrous* worship. 2. To worship the true God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth. 3. To commit no murder. 4. *Detectio nuditatum*, not to be defiled with fornication, incest, or other unlawful conjunction. 5. Against rapine, theft and robbery. 6. Concerning Administration of Justice. 7. *Membrum de viro*, so they call the Precept of not eating flesh with the blood. These Precepts most of them are the same in substance with the Commandements, and most if not all founded on the law of Nature, the reasonableness of which was discerned by natural light.

light. Many ſay that the fourth Commandment only is poſitive, but its not altogether poſitive. Its partly natural, partly moral, partly ceremonial.

That ſome conſiderable part of time ſhould be ſpent in the ſervice of God that is natural, that a ſeventh part of time thats moral poſitive, that the ſeventh more then the the firſt or ſecond, that is Ceremonial. The tradition of the ſeventh day, ſaith *Bp. Uſher* in his Letter to Dr. *Twiſs*, was not of *Moſes*, but of the fathers, and did not begin with the Commonwealth of *Iſrael*, but was deriv'd to all Nations by lineal deſcent from the ſons of *Noah*. Thoſe Heathens that were ſtrangers to the Commonwealth of *Iſrael*, though they made not the ſeventh day a Feſtival as the Iews, yet did they attribute ſome holineſs to it, and gave it a peculiar honour above the other days of the week; this perhaps might be in imitation of the Jews, as *Joſephus* ſaith. You ſee what an eſteem the very Heathens had of the Sabbath,

and

and shall not we who profess Christianity, have an honourable esteem of the Lords day. To a Jewish and superstitious observation of the *Sabbath*, *I* do not perswade you, matters of necessity, and matters of mercy, to men or brutes, ought to be done on the Sabbath; *I* would have none inslav'd to their own conceit, and worship imaginations, lest they meet with the mischance that a Jew had, who fell into a Jakes at *Tewksbury*, in the reign of *Henry* the third on a Saturday, who for fear of polluting the holiness of the day, refused to be drawn out, the Magistrate hearing of it, commanded they should let him lie the next day too for the honour of the Lords day the Christian Sabbath. Some bring in the Jew speaking thus to those that would have helpt him out.

Sabbata sancta colo, de stercore surgere nolo.

I honour only Sabbaths rest,
I will not rise from my foul Nest.

They

They bring in the Chriſtian Magiſtrate replying thus.

Sabbata noſtra quidem Solomon celebrabit ibidem.

O Solomon becauſe you are wiſe,
And for the Sabbath ſo preciſe,
Leſt from your holy rule you ſwerve,
You ſhall our Sabbath too obſerve.

Honour the Chriſtian Sabbath, do not Idolize it, ſerve God ſeriouſly and ſincerely, but be not ſuperſtitious, keep it like a ſacred Feſtival, not as a faſt. You ſee the righteouſneſs and reaſonableneſs of Gods law, therefore doe not tranſgreſs it.

2. Conſider whoſe law it is you tranſgreſs, even the law of God.

1. Its the law of an Omniſcient God, who ſeeth thee in all places, and will one day proclaim thy privy pranks upon the houſe-top, curtains and cloſet cannot conceal from him. Men and women may be naught, and the world not know it, but God knows it, and its many

ny times brought to light in this world, and their own tongues bewray them, but what appears not outwardly, is known to him that knoweth the heart; all thy secret and open violations of *Gods* Laws, all sins in thought, word and action, are known to him who knoweth thy thoughts afar off.

2. The *Law* of a holy, righteous and jealous *God*, who hateth sin perfectly, who will not pass by a breach, who cannot acquit the guilty, who will execute vengeance upon all that wilfully persist in sin, who hath told you beforehand what the wages of sin are, even eternal death.

3. The Law of that God who is the Fountain of all good, on whom thou livest, from whom thou hast thy being, continuance in thy being, and those things which make thy being comfortable. Its the *Law* of that *God* who is the *God* of

all thy mercies, and makes the creatures ſubject and ſerviceable to thee with their lives and vertues, and wilt not thou be ſubject to thy Creator.

4. The Law of that God who accepts of ſincere obedience, for perfect; the will in ſome caſes, for the deed, pence for pounds; if there be a willing minde it is accepted.

5. The Law of that God who offers power to keep what he commands, will give the ability to do what he requires. If thou ſincerely deſireth it, and faithfully depend upon him for it; Promiſes in the Goſpel are as large as Commands, uſe the means, expect his bleſſing, and do not cry out againſt the rigour of Gods Laws, and impoſſibility of keeping them, when thou neglecteſt the means, or negligently uſeſt them, and runneſt into temptation; avoid temptations carefully, uſe the means diligently, depend

depend upon God, his Covenant and Promise faithfully, and you will find Gods Commandments not grievous, but his yoke easie, and burden light. *If* you have any fear and dread of Gods Law, or love to God, take heed of sin which is the transgression of Gods *Law*; but especially have a care of wilful presumptuous sins; but what course shall *I* take to prevent these. *I* shall here superadd three or four directions.

1. Take heed of and avoid the occasions of sin: *Agur* prays not that he might not steal, but that God would keep him out of that condition that might occasion him to commit it; *Eve* by talking with the Serpent, was at length caught to eat of the forbidden fruit; *David* by seeing *Bathsheba* washing her self was tempted to commit Adultery; *Peter* by intruding himself into the High-Priests Hall, out of too much confidence of his strength, came to deny his Master, for this cause God commanded his people in the law not only

Quarles Divine Fanc. Book 3. 33 on *Dinah.*

It is no leſs then ſilent Invitation.

Although we ſcorn the ſin, to give th' occaſion.

that they ſhould worſhip no Idol, but that they ſhould demoliſh all the monuments of them, that they ſhould make no covenint, nor affinity with thoſe who worſhip'd them, leſt they ſhould be drawn by theſe occaſions to commit idolatry.

Many deceive themſelves who think it makes no matter what company they keep, what places they come in; they mean not to be corrupted, but only to obſerve the faſhion, or ſatisfie their curioſity, and ſo venture on temptation. I have read a ſtory of one *Alipius*, who being entreated by an importunate friend, to go along with him to a Playhouſe, went, though with no intention to ſee the Play, but clean contrary of ſhutting his eyes, and ſtopping his ears, that he might neither hear, nor ſee the vanities which might work in

in him an inordinate and unlawful delight; bnt being there after a little while, fed his eyes and ears with thoſe vain ſights, and profane ſpeeches. It was marvellous good Counſel which *Jerom* in one of his Epiſtles, gives to *Læta*, in order to the bringing up of her daughter vertuouſly, he wiſheth her not to ſuffer her daughter to ſee thoſe meats, which when ſhe ſeeth might be moved to deſire; *Et licet quidam patent majoris eſſe virtutis præſentem contemnere voluptatem, tamen ego arbitror ſecurioris eſſe continentiæ neſcire quid quæras.* Though ſome there be that think it a greater piece of vertue to contemn a pleaſure when it is preſent, yet I judge it to be a thing of more ſecurity not to know or ſee that thing which one may not ſafely deſire. The Romans did not well provide for the keeping their Law which they made, *That Virgins ſhould drink no Wine*, when they permitted

them to ſee it. *Solomons* wiſdom went beyond theirs, *Prov.* 23. 31. Not to look upon it when it giveth the colour in the Cup, and moveth it ſelf aright.

I have read a ſtory of a young man, who ſome conſiderable time after he had left the world, and betaken himſelf to a Monaſtery, received a packet of Letters from his father and mother, and divers of his dear friends, he durſt not look on them, but threw them into the fire with theſe words, *Ita cogitationes patriæ paritur concremamini, ne me ulterius ad illa quæ fugi revocare tentis*, be gone ye thoughts of my countrey, and burn for company, for fear left ye tempt me ere to look again towards the things which *I* have forſaken.

Take heed of the occaſions of ſin; occaſion is a ſnare whereby a man becomes a prey to ſin.

2. Alſo

2. Allow not your selves in lesser miscarriages; forbear small sins, the doctrine of the Gospel prohibits lesser offences, and excludes from heaven for the violation of small commands. The Law saith, *Thou shalt not commit adultery*; the Gospel saith, *Thou shalt not look on her to lust after her.* When people give liberty to themselves in lesser sins, they quickly fall into greater, from smaller oaths, they quickly proceed to deeper, from customary vain-swearing, to fore-swearing, from contemplative venery to actual. Nay he that will take his liberty to the full in things lawful, will easily be brought to things unlawful.

Greg. Mor. lib. 5. Solus in illicitis non cadet, qui se aliquando & a licitis cauta retringit, he only falls not into unlawful things, who denieth himself sometimes in things lawful, he that inureth himself to lighter sins for quality or degree, will not stick at greater if there be occasion

Pſal. 1. 1. *Bleſſed is the man that walks not in the counſel of the ungodly*; Expoſitors ſay, three degrees of ſinners are mentioned in thoſe words, ungodly, ſinners, ſcornful; Ungodly are ſuch as ſin now and then; ſinners are cuſtomary and profeſt ſinners: ſcornful are ſuch as are hardened in ſin, that they make but a Jeſt of it. And there are three degrees of partaking with ſinners in three words, walking, ſtanding, ſitting. 1. To walk in their counſels, is to like and have a mind to their ill courſes. 2. To ſtand in their way, is to reſolv to be of their ſociety. 3. To ſit, as to addict our ſelves wholly to their company and courſes.

3. The facility and eaſineſs of paſſing from one degree of ſin to another, is here intimated; firſt, give ear to ill counſel; afterwards, receive it and practiſe it. *Bucer* obſerves in his Expoſition on the firſt Pſalm: *Primum aliquantulum arridet*; firſt the courſes

ses of ill men please us, and allure us to imitation; but as yet we stand not in a fixt resolution in them. But if we do not presently withdraw our feet by custom, their deeds will prove more pleasing to us, and then we stand among them. If we allow our selves to stand among them; at last all shame being rejected, and Gods fear repelled, we will wholly addict our selves to them.

It is also *Calvins* observation, men do not at the first step ascend so high as a contempt of God; but after they have begun to give an ear to ill counsel; the devil leads them on further till they rush into manifest defection. *If* you would not wilfully and presumptuously transgress Gods Law, allow not your selves in lesser and lighter evils.

Salvian in his fourth Book *de Providentia*, saith, That all mankind rusheth in this order into eternal

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eternal puniſhment, 1. He kindleth the fire. 2 Gives ſtrength to it. 3. Enters the flame which himſelf hath prepared.

But when doth man firſt begin to kindle this eternal flame, namely, when he firſt begins to ſin; when doth he give ſtrength to it, when he adds ſin to ſin; when doth he enter into eternal flames, when he hath fill'd up the ſumme of his ſins; men come not to the height of ſin, and ſo to puniſhment at once, but by degrees from leſſer to greater, leſſer ſins make way for greater theſe four ways.

1. By diſpoſing the ſoul for greater, in a mans body, frequent labors, though but little, beget a fitneſs to endure greater, as *Millo*'s cuſtomary carrying his calf, while it was young, enabled him to carry it on his ſhoulder when it was come to its full growth. In a garment, a little rent makes it fit to receive a wider. Its thus with the ſoul, if a man keep his heart ſo careleſly, that he ſuffers ſome breach to

to be made, he fits it thereby for receiving greater. *Qui minima contemnit paulatim decidit*, saith *Gregory*, he which taketh no heed of the least, falls by degrees into the greatest absurdities, as *St. Augustine* saith of his mother, *Surrepsirat ei vinolentia*, too much love of wine did steal on her; this came by sipping a little wine now and then, when a girle; this ill custom would have brought on her great indecencies, had not a servant of her fathers reproacht her, and call'd her *meridibulam*, which *Saint Augustine* calls *medicinale ferrum*, a curing weapon.

2. By withdrawing that which should hinder greater, the fear of God: one kind of sin accustomed to, though little, makes the heart so hard that in time it will stick at no sin.

3. Little sins encourage the devil to come on with strong temptations to fouler; A mans patience in putting up smaller wrongs, doth

doth hearten an inſolent proud nature, to offer him greater indignities; Modeſtie encourageth impudence to act its part in a higher degree, *Reſiſt the devil*, ſaith Saint *James*, *and he will flee from you.* If he flie when we reſiſt, he will come on when we yield, *verecunda ſunt initia peccati*, the beginnings of ſin are baſhful.

4. Leſſer ſins cannot be excuſed, concealed, or maintained, but by adding of greater. *Dato unico abſurdo mille ſequuntur*, If in temptation we admit one ſin though never ſo ſmall, he will force us for the defence of that to yield to more. *Sarah*'s laughing at the Angel ended in a lie; *Peters* bare denial ended in execration and curſing. If you would then be kept from great, groſs, preſumptuous violations of Gods Law, then allow not your ſelves in leſſer miſcarriages.

3. Be fully and firmly reſolved to keep Gods Law, an unreſolved man

man is easily overturned, when a temptation comes; Διψυχος, A man of two minds is unstable; if he be in a good way he is soon cog'd out of it by an easie temptation; he that is unresolved for God, may be easily perswaded to act for the devil; Children because unresolved are easily cozened of their money, and so are unresolved people of their souls. If *Joseph* had bin foolish and fickle, he had been cog'd into a loving League, but his resolution conquer'd all her charms; A resolved Christian hath fixt his foot, and will not be removed; It must be a strong temptation that must blow him down, resolution is like the ballast of a Ship which poiseth it against wind and weather; the advantages of resolution are very great; for,

1. Resolution conquers all perswasions, what was the reason *Ruth* could not be moved from following *Naomi*, and *Orpha* was so soon entreated to be gone. The reason

reaſon is, *Ruth* had reſolved to abide by her mother, *Orpha* had not. Whats the reaſon Saint *Auguſtine* before his Converſion was ſo loth to leave ſin, and live piouſly; it was his unreſolvedneſs, when once he came to be fixt and reſolved, he brake off his ſins in a moment, and offered violence to heaven.

2. A reſolute man ſhall not be troubled with many temptations from the devil, or provocations by his friends and companions, eſpecially when his reſolutions are once known; when *Naomi* ſaw *Ruth* reſolute ſhe gave over diſſwading her, when St. *Pauls* company knew he was ſtedfaſtly bent to go to *Jeruſalem*, they left off, ſaying, *the Will of the Lord be done*, Acts 21. 13.

3. A reſolved Chriſtian will not eaſily be induced to that which is evil, his reſolution ſettles him. The devil may fling his fiery darts of ill ſuggeſtions at him; but he is like

like a wall of brass, beats them all back, and remains as he did, when the Syrens by their sweet Songs, drew a great company of *Ulysses* his followers out of the Ship to their destruction; *Ulysses* who had the wit to bind himself fast to the mast of the Ship, escaped the danger; so when friends and acquaintance come with their bewitching intreaties to draw us from God; if our hearts be bound to the mast of a fixed resolution, we shall escape those sins and dangers which they seek to draw us to. Be fixed then in a good purpose as *Joshua* was, who resolved stedfastly, let others do what they would, he and his household would serve the Lord. If thy resolution be not strong enough to hold thee in, back them with vows. The Israelites were commanded to put away their strange wives, but because it was irksom to them to leave their wives with whom they had lived many years, on whom they had beget many children, there-

therefore they were content to lay on themſelves a Vow that they would do it, *Nehem.* 5. 12. *Nehemiah* made the people ſwear and vow to reſtore the goods they had got by oppreſſion, and *Nehem.* 10. 29. the people entred into a curſe, and into an oath to walk in *Gods* Law, and obſerve all the Commandments of the Lord.

Inf. 11. If you would not wilfully and preſumptuouſly tranſgreſs *Gods* Law; then take heed of and avoid the occaſions of ſinne; allow not your ſelves in leſſer miſcarriages, be reſolute. *Is* ſin the tranſgreſſion of *Gods* Law; Then hereby you may judge whether you hate ſin as ſin or no. Sin in the formality of it is a tranſgreſſion of *Gods* Law. Is ſin odious to you on this account; It may be odious to you as it brings ſhame, horrour, and hell, and you not hate it as ſinne. If you hate it as ſinne, you will hate it becauſe diſhonourable to God, contrary to his Law;

and if you hate it on this account, then you will hate great and little, secret and open, because every sin is the transgression of Gods Law; If there be any sin in which thou livest and allowest thy self in it, thou art a base hypocrite, and all thy Sanctity is but a Juggle to delude thy self, and the world, and make thee appear what thou art not, and Hell will be thy portion, if thou repent not of, and leave that darling lust, that thou art glued to.

But if thy heart takes part with the Law, and thou condemnest thy self for every sin, and sincerely desirest, and earnestly endeavourest to conform to every Law of God, heartily desiring to have strength to conquer every sin, abhorring the sight and society of those that have drawn thee to sin, avoiding all occasions of sin, waiting upon God in the diligent use of all Ordinances, as means of Sanctity, and Preser-

vatives from ſin, thou art then a Saint.

Laſtly, Is ſin the tranſgreſſion of Gods Law? then are we all ſinners, for we have all tranſgreſt Gods Law, and we are all condemn'd, and curſt by the Law, and what ſhall we do to get our ſins pardoned, and the curſe of the Law removed; you muſt go to Chriſt, he died for our ſins, and roſe again for our Juſtification, who was made under the Law, to redeem thoſe that were under the Law. *Repent therefore of your ſins and believe in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that you may be ſaved.* Be wiſe for your ſouls, and being purſued and caſt in the Court of Law, flie to that heavenly Chancery, the Office of Mercy and Mitigation, which is ſet up in the Goſpel, and that while it is cali'd to day, before the Percullis be ſhut down, before the talent of lead ſeal up the meaſure of your wickedneſs, and the irreverſible de-

cree of writ to be gone forth; for God will not always be despised, nor suffer his Gospel ever to wait upon obdurate sinners, or his Son to stand ever at our doors, as if he stood in need of our admittance; if you are resolved to contemn grace, and keep your lusts; and judge your selves unworthy of eternal life, and stand in contempt and rebellion against his Court of mercy, he will dismiss you to the Law again.

What wilt thou do if thou shouldst be drag'd before Christs Tribunal, have all the sins that ever thou didst commit charg'd upon thee, and no Advocate to plead for thee, and then the irreversible sentence of damnation pass'd upon thee, and thou not able with all thy cries to obtain one dram of that mercy which thou hast in thy life-time despis'd.

When thou shalt hereafter peep out of thy Grave, and see Heaven and Earth on fire about thy

eares, and Chriſt coming in the flames of that fire to execute vengeance on impenitent hard-hearted ſinners, *Whither wilt thou flie from the Preſence of Him that ſits on the Throne.*

Do not hate that Miniſter, who in love to your ſouls, perſwades you to leave and hate your ſins; do not deſpiſe that love and mercy, that offers you pardon upon your Repentance.

Learn to judge your ſelves, that you may not be condemned by the Lord, to forſake your ſins, that God may not forſake you; to break them off by repentance, that he may not break you in pieces like a Potters veſſel, flie to the Sanctuary of Gods mercy, before you be held to his Tribunal of Juſtice; All that God requires of you is to relinquiſh your ſinnes, and in humility and ſincerity to accept of a Saviour; If this

this be done in truth, the life of faith in an universal obedience will follow you here, and the end of your faith hereafter the salvation of your souls.

G. H.

FINIS.

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